Castles & Crusades

Castle Keepers Guide

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THE CASTLE KEEPERS GUIDE

BY

DAVIS CHENAULT & STEPHEN CHENAULT

WITH CASEY CHRISTOFFERSON AND JAMES M. WARD

FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS BY MARK SANDY, MIKE STEWART, JASON VEY AND ROBERT DOYEL

COVER ART, LOGOS, LOGO DESIGNS, AND LAYOUT BY PETER "20 DOLLAR" BRADLEY
INTERIOR ART BY: PETER BRADLEY, JASON WALTON, SARAH "DREAMIE" WALKER, DOUG KOVACS, AND BRIAN SWARTZ

EDITED BY: TIM BURNS, CHRISTINA STILES, & DERRICK LANDWEHR
SECOND PRINTING EDITED BY STEVE EGE & MARK SANDY

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For more information on **Castles & Crusades**, and related products or to Join the **Castles & Crusades** Society please contact us at:

Troll Lord Games
1818 North Taylor Street, #143, Little Rock, AR 72207
or on the web at www.trolllord.com or email at troll@trolllord.com or www.castlesandcrusades.com

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CASTLES & CRUSADES

Knights of the Crusade

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost we must thank the many loyal fans who have patiently awaited the release of this tome. Their names are many and their patience Sisyphean. To those of you who have, over the past three years, remained loyal to Troll Lord Games and to **Castles & Crusades**, we thank you. For a small company, a task of this magnitude is difficult in the best of times, and as those of you familiar with Murphy know, it is never the best of times. Finally, it is for you all that we have completed this task because, believe you me, I would have quit long ago without you.

Davis Chenault
Winter, 2010

The CKG has definitely undergone many revolutions. From a nascent idea of how to role-play to a tome filled with optional rules for our C&C game. It has been a long, uphill battle writing and compiling this material. Innumerable interruptions have delayed the book; rumors have abounded and distracted the discussion about its eventual shape.

The work, now in its final form, represents a culmination of years of gaming experience. It involves the interaction with countless people, a listing of which is next to impossible. But most of all, for the hard, gritty work-in-progress gaming that has come to this tome, I would like to thank the bunch of yahoos who have sat at the same gaming table for decades and hammered out countless arguments, the results of which have come to these pages. I would like to thank my brother Davis, the bonehead who got me started in all this; Todd Gray, my oldest and most trusted friend, whose unflagging sense of what is right has kept me on the straight and narrow; Mac Golden, twice now a business partner who never really left the business and who himself has worked so hard on this system; Mark Sandy, who has sat at the table itching to bring his own mold to the game for so many years (Class and a half huzah!); and Chris Harris, who though he joined the table late in its run is an integral part of the game we play and an almost flawless foil for my own roguish style.

There are others, of course, but I'll not belabor the point but rather comment that a special thanks goes to Peter Bradley, who joined our company in 2004 and has been an unflagging participant of this insane ride, listening to my belabored opinions, strange toilet bowl blue art comments with both patience and professionalism, and who, through it all, has become a very good and trusted confidant and friend.

I cannot write this page with mentioning Casey Christofferson. He has become and remains a huge part of TLG the company and me personally. His undaunted lust for life spills over into every thing he creates and writes, a lust reflected in this book and in the company. Whenever I talk to Casey my worries seem to erode.

I must thank E. Gary Gygax, a man who in his demeanor, his treatment of TLG, and of me in particular, and the friendship we developed over the many years of our work together gave me the impetus and even the desire to do what he did very best of all, make games and bring fun to the tables of so many different people. He was and is an inspiration.

I must of course echo Davis' thank you to the fans of this our Crusade, people who have worked hard to bring this game to the attention of so many people and expanded its reach. They are the true reason for the game's success. So to you all a very kind, gracious and very southern Thank You (which involves lots of brew, food, shoulder slapping and the like).

I must mention my wife, Kathy Chenault, who has showed an unflagging amount of support for me and this company during all these many years, never wavering in her belief in me and what TLG could be.

If you find fault with this tome, or it fails in any way, the blame lies squarely on the shoulders of Davis Chenault, please direct all complaints to his email address!

Stephen Chenault
Winter, 2010

To the Troll Lords. It's long been a dream of mine to do art for a game company. Almost as long as I've been in gaming. Which is longer than I care to think about at times. It may be a silly ambition to most people. However, I've always felt that the individual should follow their dreams and do what makes them happy, no matter how silly others might think it. Much appreciation goes to the Troll Lords for helping me realise a dream, and for Steve knowing talent when Davis sees it.

Peter Bradley
Winter Dark 2010

THE RULES WE LIVE BY

"The rules we live by." I have ended the title of this preface in a preposition; this is both appropriate and intentional. One can make the honest claim that, grammatically speaking, the title is incorrect; a preposition dangles at its end. That is a rule that most of us learn in school. Written correctly, or so our schooling teaches us, the phrase should read, "The Rules by which We Live." Do not end a sentence with a preposition. This is a rule by which we live or one, so they tell us, that we should live by. Rules govern our language. However, there is another way of looking at that rule, and many other rules. The great English Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill, put it best; in a comment regarding the rule on prepositions and their placement at the end of a sentence he said simply, "That is nonsense up with which I shall not put."

Treat the rules presented in the **Castles & Crusades Players Handbook** and the **Castle & Crusades Monsters and Treasure** in the same manner Churchill treated prepositions. The bugbears of grammatical formality and adherence to those ever evolving rules swirling about the usage of our language, often do little more than produce stilted phraseology and a monotonous dialogue little capable of conveying what the writer wishes to express. The point is, don't allow the rules presented in our books to become roadblocks on your path to fun and adventure. In the context of your storyline or adventure or the events occurring on the ground, should you need to change, ignore, or amend the rules, **You Should.** Don't allow the rules to get in the way of telling a good story.

Castles & Crusades is a role-playing game designed to allow for the interactive telling of an adventure. In order for that adventure to occur, two events must take place. The Castle Keeper must design an adventure, and the players must overcome that adventure's challenges. The adventure can end in disaster or even go uncompleted, yet still everyone can have some fun and enjoy themselves. It's playing through the story that is the fun part. The genius of role-playing games is that they allow you to play through a story you write. Like no other game, RPGs in general, and **Castles & Crusades** in particular, allow us to spin yarns of wild abandon and live out those yarns in the safety and comfort of the real world.

It is important to ignore the rules on occasion, all in order to ensure the adventure goes forward. Consider that an elaborate adventure, with a lot of action and excitement, causes the players to move in one direction. They are excited and ready to go forward, extending the night's play by another two hours just to follow through with what they have begun. Let's say that the players have found themselves in a situation in which the entire adventure's continuance depends on one roll of the die by one character. For example, a tracking check to follow a creature to its lair. Or perhaps a successful find secret door check. Perhaps even something as mundane as a successful pick pocket check. Suddenly you have a whole lot of fun sitting on the needle of a whole lot of luck.

It seems that having an entire game come down to one of these moments is somewhat ludicrous. To keep the adventure moving forward, the above must always be successful. But how does one do that? It can be done fairly simply, and without needing to bend or ignore a rule, just by modifying the situation under which it occurs. Have the creature leave an obvious trail, leave the trunk unlocked and the secret door just a little ajar.

Take tracking - a pet peeve of mine - for example. Many players would like their characters to be able to track, which is understandable. The ability to track sounds really cool. A lot of heroes, such as Aragorn and Conan, could track. There are frontiersman and Ojibwe warriors who could track, and tracking can come in handy during a game. Should the party of a character need to locate a creature or person who has just escaped into the woods, why they can track them down and find them. This makes tracking seem like a very important aspect to the game or to a character's ability to pursue an adventure or some such.

But is it? Not really. Let us say that I have designed an adventure wherein the characters have to pursue, capture, and bring someone to justice. A tracker would seem to be a necessary augmentation to the game. That is not really the case though. Should I have designed such an adventure, why surely I would have devised several methods whereby the party could give chase and have the chance of finding the villain without it being dependent solely upon one roll of the die by a character who can track. If the tracking check or the chasing were dependent upon the ranger successfully tracking and the tracking roll failed, the adventure is over. Move on to the next target. Surely there must be another method or manner?

In **Castles & Crusades**, there is. That other method lies with you, the Castle Keeper. It lies in your imagination, and even more it lies in the imagination of your players. The need of tracking limits everyone to the outcome of the roll, but using your imagination to expand the game does not. Instead, it opens up a whole new vista of opportunity.

Rules do not guide you. They govern your actions and limit your ability to play.

What I am saying is that the ability to track, ultimately, should not be that important to the game. It may allow the Castle Keeper to convey information to the party they might otherwise not have been able to glean, but that is only useful in a limited context. The point is that the Castle Keeper must convey the story irrespective of the presence or absence of the rules. Limiting oneself to the rules restricts the possibilities. In a too strict adherence to the rules, the Castle Keeper restricts his own ability to plan for the adventure, to allow for outside occurrences, new ideas, or original approaches that the players may present. Ultimately, the adventure must have several pathways whereby the characters attain the ultimate goal. As such, the ability to track is just one of many methods to convey information to the characters and to propel the story forward.

Despite all that, you are holding in your hands a book of rules. Keep them in context.

Let us begin.

INTRODUCTION

The Siege Engine is the foundation. It is the fundamental mechanic that drives the **Castles & Crusades** role-playing game. It allows the Castle Keeper, the game master, to adjudicate any occurrence in the game fairly, quickly, and easily. However, though it is the core of the **C&C** game, the Siege Engine does not supply the Castle Keeper or the player with every tool necessary to run a smooth, fast, and fun role-playing game. There are elements missing such as interaction with NPCs. The Siege Engine provides the tool to settle any interaction that a player character (PC) may have with a non-player character (NPC), but it cannot supply all the extenuating circumstances that might influence the outcome that the Siege Engine must inevitably produce. This is the responsibility of the Castle Keeper. Governing these circumstances are the minutiae that make up any role-playing game, but in a rules-light game like **C&C**, they are far more important, for in the absence of regulations, it is the CK who must provide guidance.

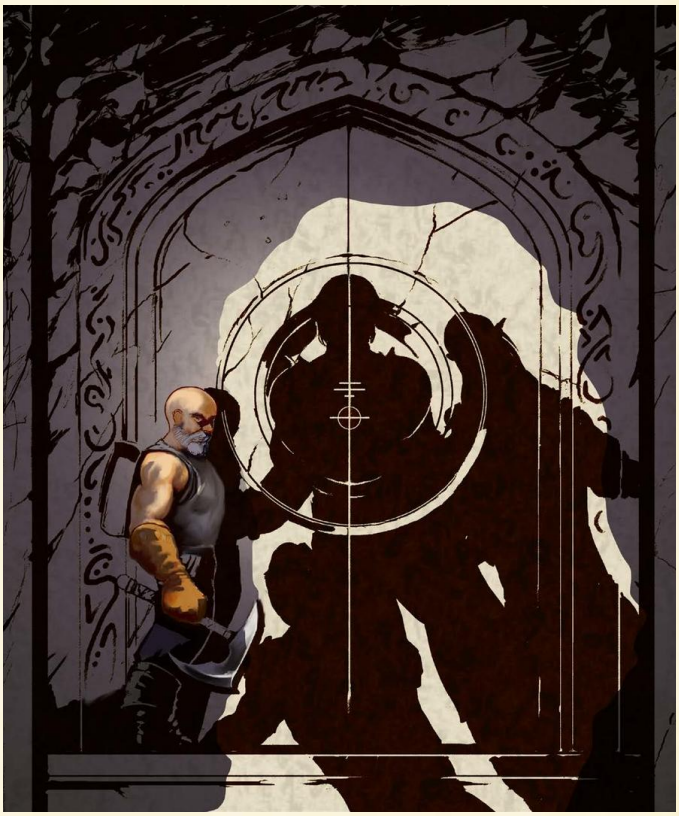
These extenuating circumstances are the very particulars that often make or break a game; knowledge of them, whatever they may be, is often required of the CK, but with no baseline to act from and CKs must fall back upon their own devices. Though relying upon one's imagination to create a framework to explain such extenuations is not necessarily a bad thing, it is problematical in that it causes unnecessary delays in the play of the game. Something as simple as an NPC's loyalty to a character, based upon time served, awards received, and treatment, is something that can seriously interrupt a game's flow, slowing it as beleaguered CKs wrestle out their own set of guidelines and rules.

This is where the **Castle Keepers Guide** comes into play. The book includes a host of material for the long-term player as well as the CK. It also includes a wide framework from which CKs can build their games. The **Castle Keepers Guide** provides the CK and the player with a host of new tools for their use, tools designed to enhance play, not hinder it; designed to be malleable from table to table. The book's evolution has been a natural expansion of its original intent, a book designed to teach new players how to turn a successful game into something greater. While maintaining the original concept, the book's manifestation has grown beyond it. Forces from within the TLG offices and without, upon the manifold tables where gamers are nightly hacking out adventures, have given this book far greater scope.

DECONSTRUCTING THE CKG

In order to understand what the **CKG** offers and how to best use it, it is necessary to understand how the book is structured. Essentially, the **CKG** consists of three distinct parts: Expanded Play, Adding Depth, and Optional Rules.

Expanded Play focuses on the game in general, being flush with expanded material for the characters and Castle Keeper. No rule contained in this section is necessary to play **Castles & Crusades**, though it may add depth to your game play by expanding upon rules and aspects of gaming not detailed in the **Castles & Crusades Players Handbook**.



Adding Depth's primary focus is on the dynamics of a role-playing game and how to flesh out the game through adding depth to the adventures, the settings, plots, and the host of accoutrements CKs may find useful. Though written for the Castle Keeper, players may find information contained in Adding Depth useful.

Optional Rules are self-explanatory. These rules are not necessary to play **C&C** but offer something many players like: options and more detail. Section three presents several options for reaching any one goal; this specific approach discourages gamers from becoming overly reliant on rules and developing a "canonical" or "purist" approach to **C&C**. It also facilitates the creation of consistent home rules through a greater understanding of the rules and the impact modifying and expanding them has on the game.

Each chapter of the **Castle Keepers Guide** explores new avenues to solve old problems, supplies frameworks for the CK and player, and adds optional rules for all modes of play. Many of these rules are new and add a whole new layer, or several layers, of structure to a game whose true value lies in its rules-light approach to role-playing problems. In order to mitigate the potential for rule-clusters to overbear situational circumstances within a game properly governed from the hip by the CK, the **Castle Keepers Guide** takes an unusual approach. Where applicable the **CKG**

presents several different types of rules to expand the game. These options are very generally broken down into three categories: role playing, rules light, and the tyranny of rules. For instance, skills; in Chapter 18, several systems of skills are presented to the table. The first is a simple approach of role-playing out new skills characters might acquire and how to balance them with the game. The second is a simple list of skills that one might acquire with very simple explanations of what they offer to the player, leaving the bulk of it to the CK. In the tyranny is a more complex, interactive set of skills that players can earn or choose for the characters that come with a full set of situational modifiers.

The rules for **Castles & Crusades** were intentionally designed to be malleable. Those playing the game should find that creating rules or bringing in rules from other games is not only possible, but also actually fairly easy. This allows players to make the game 'theirs.' The game of **Castles & Crusades** is like a machine that its user can constantly tinker with in order to create an engine more suited to the architect's needs and tastes. The final game-rules for **Castles & Crusades** should come from those playing it, not those creating it. None of the three options for adding skills to your game inhibits the ability to do just that. CKs and players must decide which to use, if any, and how to use them. There are no official skills in **Castles & Crusades**. There are only several optional rules systems from which to choose. Several chapters, though not all, of the **Castle Keepers Guide** mimic this approach. It is your game, and you must choose which best fits at your table. This approach preserves the adaptable nature of the **C&C** rules.

The **Castle Keepers Guid***e* frequently references styles of play. They are broken down in three general types: gritty, classic, and epic. Very loosely, gritty role-playing consists of games that offer little in the way of player aid. The mortality rate is high, magic plays a smaller role in the outcome of events, and chance determines outcome as often as skill. Character death comes hard and fast in gritty games. The average is normal, the extraordinary is rare. Attribute modification is tightened up so that achieving great events is all the more difficult. Classic role playing offers more in the way of fantastic, reflected in the standard **C&C** rules of attribute modification. Here chance plays a smaller role and long shots enter the realm of very possible. These games enroll the entire standard fantasy role-paying fare. The final approach, the epic, expands upon the attribute modification, exploring the realms of heroes. Here players can attempt and routinely achieve deeds of surpassing valor. The expanded scope of the possible defines epic games.

VERBIAGE

Throughout the **CKG** references are made to wizards and illusionists, where they are combined, the word magic user is used. This is not a throw back to other versions of older fantasy role-playing games, but rather a common usage to lump those two classes together and stop the too often needed reference to wizards and illusionists.

The SIEGE Engine

Knowledge of the Siege Engine and how it works is necessary in order to play **Castles & Crusades**. Its elegance of form, however, makes it simple to understand and easy to adjudicate. The **Castles & Crusades Players Handbook** presents and explains the Siege Engine in-depth. A recitation of those rules would only be redundant in this tome. However, as a simple refresher, we've copied the brief player's introduction to the Siege Engine from the **Players Handbook** here.

Almost all non-combat actions in **Castles & Crusades** for which the Castle Keeper deems a roll is necessary to determine success or failure are resolved by an attribute check.

Every check has an associated attribute. Whenever one of these checks is made a d20 is rolled by the player. Attribute and level modifiers, for class abilities only, are added to this roll, if applicable. If the result is equal to or greater than a number generated by the Castle Keeper, called the challenge class, then the attribute check is successful.

The challenge class is a number generated by the Castle Keeper that represents the degree of difficulty for performing that action. The challenge class is generated in two steps. The first is ascertaining the challenge base. This is determined by whether or not the associated attribute is a primary or secondary one. If the associated attribute is a primary attribute, the challenge base is 12 and if it is a secondary attribute, the challenge base is 18. Next, the Castle Keeper adds or subtracts the challenge level to the challenge class. The challenge level represents the degree of difficulty the Castle Keeper believes appropriate for the action being taken. This usually ranges between 0 and 10, but can go higher. The sum total is the challenge class, and the player must roll higher than that to successfully perform the action.

Tyranny of the Rules

The **Castle Keepers Guide** is a book that presents the **C&C** player with a host of new rules and options for their games. In some respects it simply builds upon existing structures, making them more useful and playable, while offering no real impact upon the way a CK runs a game or what is allowed. These options simply expand the working knowledge of the game. In other cases the impact these rules carry can be staggering. Though they cannot change the nature of the Siege Engine, they can change the nature of the game you want to run. Take caution while expanding your game with new rules and options. The more rules that you add to your game, the more clarity it gains, but the more freedom of action you lose.

That aside, the **CKG** offers a wonderful array of quickly accessible charts and tables that allow CKs to rapidly resolve simple problems, players to expand their characters into high levels and with new equipment, treasure, and possibilities. It all begins with Chapter One and the character attributes.

CHAPTER 1 – EXPANDING CHARACTERS

Characters are the centerpiece of any **Castles & Crusades** (**C&C**) game; without characters, there is no game. **C&C** players experience the game through their characters, and while the game's tone and overall story certainly emanate from the Castle Keeper, that tone and story only come alive when the characters are on stage, in action, up front and center. Take Beowulf's crossing of the swamps of Denmark, for instance; while he is merely traversing the swamps and empty lands, his passing is of little note or consequence. It is not until Beowulf crosses the fens and enters the tale of Grendel echoing upon Denmark's winds that the story comes to life. It's the same with a role-playing game: characters and their interactions bring the setting, the adventure, and the entire game to life.

Understanding that characters are the cornerstone of **C&C** (and of all role-playing games, really) is necessary to understanding the importance of character creation within the game. Characters must reflect the game's tone, which is something the Castle Keeper (CK) can control. Should the Castle Keeper desire such control, then establishing character-creation guidelines is very important and highly advised. From choosing names to rolling attributes, every character aspect can add or detract from the game. For instance, a foppish, silly character who prefers playing jokes on others and wreaking havoc may not suit a campaign where stoic men with thick broadswords and axes eat roasted turkey on the leg and down droughts of mead. First, the men would likely kill such an annoying character. Second, such a character disrupts the game's tone and causes in-game distractions, ultimately detracting from the setting, the adventure, the game, and the other players' enjoyment of the campaign. For this reason, the CK will likely want to govern character design within the game.

Note: As important as it is to keep the characters consistent with the game's context, it is equally important that the CK give the players *some* latitude in character creation. Allowing players to create characters they actually want to play makes the game far more fun for them. Making a strict set of guidelines for character creation might maintain the tone, but if it chases away the players, then it's going to be a quiet day at the table.

With this in mind, character creation takes on a whole new importance, both for the player and the Castle Keeper.

ATTRIBUTES

Character attributes are the foundation of character creation. As noted in the **Castles & Crusades Players Handbook**, there are six attributes: strength, constitution, dexterity, intelligence, wisdom, and charisma. In the game, each attribute has a numeric score ranging from 3-18. To generate each attribute, players roll 3d6 and total the result for each of the six attributes. The standard method of creating attributes presented in the **Castles & Crusades Players Handbook** results in a bell curve of scores, with 10 and 11 being the most common result and 3 and 18 being the least common.

This book presents **Castles & Crusades** players with five new attribute generation options. Naturally, Castle Keepers determine which method is allowed in their games, but the new options now permit players to design their characters as desired, or let the luck of the dice prevail.

CKs should keep in mind the following points regarding attribute generation before choosing any particular method for their game. How powerful do you want the game's characters to be? The more dice used for attribute generation, the more powerful the characters will become. What fantasy flavor is desired for the game? CKs running epic-style games where players need truly heroic characters should go with a method that increases each character's attribute scores. If the CK wants a standard fantasy role-playing game flavor, then a method that only incrementally increases the characters' power should be selected. If a more gritty game is desired, then the CK should select the method producing the lowest average scores for the attributes.

When deciding on which method to allow, it is important to note the kinds of characters the players want to play, as dice-determined attribute scores go a long way in defining available character classes. Random rolls giving a character an 18 intelligence and a 7 strength, for instance, make such a character a far more effective spellcaster than a fighter, thereby limiting the character's class choices; and if the affected player does not want to play a spellcaster, then the player may decide not to play at all, or the player may play but be very unhappy with and disinterested in the character and so contribute little to the gaming experience. So, dice-determined characters can

critically affect a game's direction, especially if the group ends up with only spellcaster-worthy characters!

CKs should ask the players if they prefer to choose classes for their characters, or if they are fine with letting the dice determine their available choices. Normally, players choose a class to play, and they then arrange their attribute scores to suit that desired class. Long-time players however may have an affinity to playing a certain class and not want to stray from it. So, for some players, methods allowing the luck of the dice to provide class selection may not be met with enthusiasm, even though playing a non-standard class for them may be an adventure in itself, one that stretches their role-playing abilities. Castle Keepers may also have an issue with such methods, as a resulting party heavily swayed toward fighters or spellcasters may have a detrimental effect on a readied adventure requiring a range of character classes to survive its dangers. Ultimately, the leaving-it-up-to-luck methods may not prove suitable for all gaming groups, and so should be used only after a thorough discussion of their limits.

Also, before choosing a method for generating attribute scores, Castle Keepers should have a handle on the basic attribute ranges for commoners within their game. While this information rarely comes into play, **C&C** characters should be better than the average person in the game's setting; they are the rare souls who possess that extra something which allows them to purposely and willingly pit themselves against the reckless dangers of the world. Knowing the average attribute range of actual commoners allows CKs to establish a character benchmark, so to speak.

For a standard game, it is suggested that common folk have an attribute range of 3-13 (2d6+1). CKs can adjust this range as needed, but use of this range ensures the player characters are above par. Bear in mind, this attribute score range is for the commonest of the common folk, not those in specialized professions like men-at-arms; for the more specialized individuals, the CK may want to use the standard method (3d6) for attribute scores. Ultimately, the CK should feel free to amend these suggested rules, deciding what is best for the campaign at hand.

Finally, consider the game's genre before choosing any one method. The following list establishes some very loose guidelines about types and styles of play. The methods of attribute generation (detailed in **Alternative Attribute Generation** below) refer to these types of play, giving the CK a better understanding of where each method falls and how each interacts with the genre.

EPIC: An epic role-playing fantasy environment involves confrontations with very powerful creatures and magic, and they often involve or lead to world-shattering events. These elements are present from the very beginning of play. For average characters, these adventures are incredibly deadly. For this game style, the CK should seriously consider allowing players to use Method Three for character creation. The CK might go so far as allowing the players to choose the attribute slots for the resulting dice scores.

CLASSIC: Classic games are more of your standard fantasy role-playing environments; they are designed for characters to experience various monstrous and magical challenges that can be deadly but aren't overly so. Thematically, heroic fantasy generally involves adventures which do not alter the world's landscape or allow characters to interact with deities or such. For these games, the CK should consider using Method Two for character generation. If the Castle Keeper prefers to allow the dice to decide the characters' classes, then not allowing players to arrange the rolls as they see fit is the only alteration needed with this method.

GRITTY: Gritty fantasy games involve a more realistic approach to adventure, where mundane encounters are challenging and there are often high character mortality rates at all levels. Magic tends to be less of a concern, and the monsters tend to the more common type, but they are more numerous. In gritty games, the preferred method of attribute generation is Method Six.

ALTERNATIVE ATTRIBUTE GENERATION

METHOD ONE: This is the standard method as outlined in the **Players Handbook**. Roll 3d6 and add the results of the three dice together for each attribute to create a total score ranging from 3 to 18. Once the six scores are generated, each score is assigned to an attribute of the player's choice.

METHOD TWO: Roll 4d6. Discard the lowest-scoring die and total the remaining three. Do this for each of the six attributes. This method raises the average attribute score, increasing the power of the character as compared to the standard **C&C** method. Increasing the average attributes in the game increases attribute modifier bonuses to hit points, to the to-hit roll, and to damage. The character thus becomes more powerful and is more likely to successfully perform tasks and survive.

If the Castle Keeper desires the characters be very powerful, have the players roll 5d6 and drop the lowest two results for each attribute. Whether using 4d6 or 5d6, this method creates classic fantasy characters.

METHOD THREE: For each attribute, roll 3d6 six times and keep the highest score. This method allows for high-average attribute scores, and it has the same effect as Method Two in game play, except the player does not arrange the attribute scores as desired. This method encourages a player to choose a particular class based upon the final arrangement of the attribute scores.

Example: Using Method Three, the player received the following results: strength 13, constitution 11, dexterity 16, intelligence 9, wisdom 12, and charisma 17. A paladin and bard benefit most from a high charisma; a rogue, assassin, and a ranger character benefit from a high dexterity. Though the player does not have to choose any of those classes, the character's attribute scores indicate which classes would be most advantageous to play. In the above example, the wizard or illusionist character classes would be the player's least likely choices.

In addition to the above-noted effects on play, this character-creation method has a resonance of genetic predetermination to it. The player is not "in command" of the character's underlying nature, rather the dice are in command. The attribute scores themselves force players to play classes they might not otherwise choose to play. This may or may not be a good thing, so the Castle Keeper and players should discuss this issue prior to agreeing to use this method of attribute generation.

METHOD FOUR: Roll 3d6 and total the results for each attribute. The scores are not arranged as desired. Produce 13 characters in this manner. The player then chooses one of the 13 characters to play.

This method only incrementally increases the character's power, and only when the character is considered as a whole, as the individual character has not received any increase in attribute generation. As with Method Two, this method creates a sense of predetermination in character generation, with forces outside the player determining the best class choice; yet, the ample supply of character choices generated with this method should provide the player with a character of preferable class to play.

METHOD FIVE: This method places the onus of attribute generation almost entirely upon the player. The player receives 66 points to divide among the character's attributes as desired. Each attribute must have a minimum of 3 points spent on it.

EXAMPLE: The player assigns the character's 66 attribute points as follows: strength 9, constitution, 13, dexterity 17, intelligence 9, wisdom 9, and charisma 9.

Method Five places the choice of attribute scores entirely in the players' hands. Many players like this method because it allows them to specifically design the character they want to play. It does encourage creating minimum and maximum characters however, which means the character will have many low attribute scores and a few high ones.

The Castle Keeper can adjust the allowed attribute points to increase the type of game play desired. To increase the characters' average attribute scores, simply have the players add a d4, d6, d8, or even a d10 roll to the normal 66 points. Note the additional points can increase the attribute scores quickly, creating truly powerful characters; for this reason, the Castle Keeper should be careful to ensure the resulting characters' power matches the type of game intended.

METHOD SIX: Use any of the systems above, but reduce any one attribute by two points or any two attributes by one point, and then increase a second attribute by one. Basically, the player trades two points to raise one attribute by one point.

ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS

Attributes, if they are high or low enough, provide the character with an attribute modifier. This modifier is a number added to or subtracted from attribute checks, saving throws, to-hit rolls, damage, etc. As noted in the **Players Handbook**, each attribute has a modifier assigned to it. The modifiers are as follows:

TABLE 1.1 ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS

2-3	-3
4-5	-2
6-8	-1
9-12	0
13-15	+1
16-17	+2
18-19	+3

The attribute modifiers reflect a depressed bell curve such that the truly extraordinary modifiers remain extraordinary and the averages fall on the low end of the modification scale. Some CKs may desire a wider scope of modifiers. If Castles Keepers desire to change the attribute modifiers, the following methods are suggested.

Castle Keepers wanting to adjust the game's power dynamic without affecting the overall Siege Engine might seek to alter the attribute modifiers. Used in tandem with changes in the attribute-generation system, however, the overall change in a character's power can be dramatic. By increasing the average attribute score and increasing the average bonus for an attribute score, one quickly increases the average chance of an action's success. The change can be as high as 10% at **1st level**, which is quite a shift in the game's dynamic.

NOTE: Castle Keepers should be cautious when changing the attribute modifiers, as this can impact the game directly, offsetting the mechanics of monsters, treasure, traps, and other components of the game.

As with the attribute-generation system, carefully consider the impact any changes may have on play. How difficult should it be to successfully complete an action? The higher the average attribute modifier, the easier it becomes to complete actions successfully. The standar approach is that a +3/-3 is the furthest and rarest deviation from the norm. By creating a bell curve and expressing that power as associated with only one attainable attribute, we have kept what is a 20% bonus fairly rare.

ALTERNATIVE ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS

For those wishing to ratchet up the power dynamic, consider using the below-listed modification methods for the desired game style.

EPIC: For epic games, consider using Method Two below. This method significantly increases the characters' power and gives them the ability to defeat powerful monsters at lower levels, which, in turn, requires the CK ramp up the game's challenges more quickly, as well.

CLASSIC: The standard fantasy setting is best suited for the standard **C&C** attribute-modification rules. However, Method One is also an option that only incrementally increases a character's power, reducing the chances for death and increasing the power of the encounters accordingly.

GRITTY: The preferred method for low fantasy is the standard **C&C** attribute modification. This method maintains the average and the extraordinary. On the other hand, because low fantasy has a gritty feel to it and the range of challenges can be great, giving the characters a rare but definite edge can greatly increase excitement at the game table. Considering this, Method Three would be an optimal choice.

METHOD ONE: This is a standard approach such that no bell curve exists. There is little appreciable difference between this method and the standard method, but close examination reveals the character's power is potentially increased.

TABLE 1.2 ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS METHOD 1

3-4	-3
5-6	-2
7-8	-1
9-12	0
13-14	+1
15-16	+2
17-18	+3

METHOD TWO: This method mimics the bell curve, but increases the character's range of modification, potentially making the character much more powerful than the standard **C&C** character.

TABLE 1.3 ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS METHOD 2

3	-4
4	-3
5-6	-2
7-8	-1
9-12	0
13-14	+1
15-16	+2
17	+3
18	+4

METHOD THREE: This method increases the character's power while having a standard attribute modification approach and no bell curve, and it manages to keep the extraordinary (the +4) extraordinary.

TABLE 1.4 ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS METHOD 3

2-3	-4
4-5	-3
6-7	-2
8-9	-1
10-11	0
12-13	+1
14-15	+2
16-17	+3
18-19	+4

ATTRIBUTES & CHARACTER AGE

Castles & Crusades assumes characters begin their adventuring careers as young adults or adults. A character's age affects his attribute scores. With youth, physical attributes wax; with age, they begin to wane, while mental ones become more acute, burgeoning with a lifetime's worth of experience. When characters reach venerable age, however, their bodies, both mentally and physically, begin to deteriorate as their inevitable march toward death encroaches ever closer.

Attribute modifiers for character age are included in the racial section in the **Players Handbook**.

ATTRIBUTES EXPANDED

Whether through character design or game interaction, such as magic spells or magic items, characters may occasionally gain or earn, temporarily or permanently, attributes beyond the normal scale provided in the **Players Handbook**. These attributes reflect abilities beyond those of normal characters; they are god-like abilities, granting the one so imbued with extraordinary

TABLE 1.5 GOD-LIKE ATTRIBUTES

Score	Bonus	Strength	Dexterity	Constitution	Intelligence	Wisdom	Charisma
1	-4	Incapable of lifting objects over 5 lbs	-1 to initiative	Contracts all diseases	Wiz/Ill cannot cast spells above 3rd level	Cler/Druid cannot cast spells above 3rd level	Repulses people
20	+4		+1 initiative				Fascinate as 4th level Bard
21	+4	Use 2 - handed weapons w/1 hand	+10 feet on normal move	Immune to disease	Wiz/Ill receive extra 4th level spell	Cler/Druid receive extra 4th level spell	Charm as 3rd level wizard
22	+5		+2 initiative	Can sustain damage up to -1 before falling unconscious		Turn double the number of undead	
23	+5	Throw rocks as a hill giant	Dodge and take ½ movement	Delay poison as a 5th level ranger	Wiz/Ill receive extra 5th level spell	Cler/Druid receive extra 5th level spell	Fascinate as 5th level bard
24	+6		+3 initiative				
25	+6	Strike +1 magical creatures with fist		Double natural healing	Wiz/Ill receive extra 6th level spell	Cler/Druid receive extra 6th level spell	Inspire as 10th level knight
26	+7		+4 initiative				
27	+7	Throw rocks as a frost giant		Regenerate 1hp per round	Wiz/Ill receive extra 7th level spell	See ethereal and astral creatures	Fascinate as 6th level bard
28	+8		+5 initiative				
29	+9				Wiz/Ill receive extra 8th level spell		Cause fear as 10th level wizard
30	+10		+6 initiative	Regenerate 2 hps per round			

skills and powers. **Castles & Crusades** allows for characters to have ability scores up to 30. Attribute scores beyond 30 lie within the CK's realm of rules creation.

BEAUTY

The basic **Castles & Crusades** rules do not have an ability that corresponds to physical beauty. Many equate charisma with beauty, but this is not the case. Charisma is the persona that an individual possesses, their force of personality. Charismatic people may be, but need not be, beautiful. Beauty is a combination of physical allure and emotional satisfaction. Beautiful people are not necessarily people everyone looks upon with desire, but rather they are ones who attract by their very nature, engendering emotional responses of devotion rather than of desire. Beauty does not appeal to the natural instincts or drives, but rather to emotive instincts creatures with inferior or above-average intelligence possess.

Beauty is an optional attribute. CKs should take careful note of its potential impact on their games before allowing the attribute in. These rules serve as a general guideline for those rare encounters where beauty comes into play.

Beauty is highly subjective. Literally dozens of factors determine someone's beauty; physical looks are the most obvious, but the relative importance of these erodes in the face of cultural norms. Whereas one individual may be beautiful in one region, people in another area may not view the same individual in the same light. For this reason, **Castles & Crusades** does not consider beauty a normal attribute. This does not mean that physical beauty does not have a role in **C&C**. In fact, it already exists. Several monsters have the *divine beauty* ability. The nymph, for instance, can charm individuals of almost any race or type with her sheer beauty. Magic partially determines the nymph's beauty, as the viewer is charmed into seeing her as something beyond his normal ken. Even beyond that, however, the nymph possesses a flawless form and an otherworldly nature. Her beauty is universally acknowledged by both sexes and by members of all races; it mesmerizes those viewing her, almost charming them.

It is certainly possible that characters and NPCs possess such physical charm. In **Castles & Crusades**, the beauty attribute determines the extent of an individual's allure. To determine the character's beauty, roll 3d6.

Beauty: This optional attribute represents the inherent beauty of individuals; it is their ability to charm or repulse those around them with their presence alone. This ability to charm or mesmerize those around them is dependent on race and sex. These abilities should be used with care, taking into account their long-term game effects. A creature does not need to "activate" any abilities associated with the beauty attribute for their effects to occur. The effects occur constantly and immediately. Individuals charmed, enthralled, or even following suggestions do so upon meeting the individual. However, rejection, or the realization that the creature is using its beauty for its own ends can come at a heavy price, as enthralled individuals often react very violently upon learning the truth.

TABLE 1.6 BEAUTY ATTRIBUTE AND ABILITIES

Beauty Score	Optional Abilities
1-2	Their beauty is so horrid they project a living nightmare. Those failing a wisdom save are repulsed and seek to remove themselves from the person's presence.
3-5	All charisma checks of those around the individual are made at -2.
6-15	No appreciable effects.
16-17	They have the ability to influence those around them. Their beauty is such that those failing a wisdom save are inclined to follow a particular course of action suggested to them.
18	They have the ability to charm people. Their beauty is such that those failing their wisdom save become convinced they desire to befriend and protect this individual.
19-24	Their beauty exceeds that of normal mortals, and instantly enthralls those viewing them. They can even influence those who merely glimpse them. Individuals failing a wisdom save follow them as if affected by a *mass suggestion* spell.
25-29	Their beauty is such that it shines from within, transcending culture and language, allowing the viewer to project perfection upon them Anyone failing a wisdom save falls under their sway, lost to the power of their beauty so long as the beautiful creature wills it. The failing individual's wisdom score determines the effect's duration: **1-2:** 2d4 days; **3-5:** 1d4 days; **6-8:** 5d4 hours; **9-12:** 4d4 turns; **13-15:** 3d4 rounds; **16-17:** 2d4 rounds; **18+:** 1d4 rounds.
30+	Their beauty transcends the divine. Any who look upon them must make a successful wisdom save or become overwhelmingly enthralled, bound to that individual as with a permanent *charm* spell.

Beauty Modifier

In the case of individuals with a beauty of 13 or more, the modifier is added to the beautiful individual's level or hit dice to determine the Challenge Level of the individual's charm ability. An individual's charisma, constitution, and wisdom modifiers augment the modified CL.

In the case of individuals with a beauty of 8 or less, the modifier applies toward those affected, becoming a minus to their roll. Other attributes have no effect.

TABLE 1.7 BEAUTY ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS

1	2-3	4-5	6-8	9-12	13-15	16-17	18-19*
-4	-3	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

* For any beauty score beyond 19, refer to **Table 1.5 God-Like Attributes** for the attribute bonus.

Example 1: All men considered Vivienne, Queen of Kayomar, mother to Robert Luther, last King of that fabled realm before the Dark descended, as the most beautiful woman to grace the histories of the world. The tales were not far from the truth. Her attributes, 18 wisdom, 16 constitution, 15 charisma, and 21 beauty, set her above average mortals. When she was still very young, men remarked on her ability to enchant those around her. For game purposes, at **1st level** she had a CL of 11 (combining her level and her attribute modifiers). In later life, after she had achieved **12th level**, her CL became 22.

Example 2: Coburg the Undying, Lord of Aufstrag, appears as a man, but his life's evil deeds weigh upon his countenance such that other men cannot see his form but for the horror of it. This gives Coburg an effective beauty of 1. He is a **23rd level** Fighter. To look upon Coburg is to be disgusted, almost to the point of despair. Those who fail their save fall back from him, trying to avoid his gaze or notice.

EPIC ADVENTURES AND EXTENDED CLASS LEVELS

HIGH-LEVEL ADVENTURES

Epic, or high-level, adventures take characters into realms far beyond even the extraordinary struggles of heroes pitted against legendary monsters and those who plunder the wealth of lost civilizations. Epic-level adventures reflect a classification of power that is not easy to discern, for the power itself is immense, encompassing the struggles of titanic creatures who, through their actions, can alter the landscape around them or the course of history. Epic adventures carry the story arc into the realm of sagas, where Achilles battles Hector before the walls of Troy; where Conan, through the brutality of his primeval will, breaks the sorcery of the Wizards of the Black Circle; where Gandalf wages war with the Balrog in the deepest places of the earth and even onto the highest mountains; and where the Council of Light endures the long march of Aufstrag's Halls to enter the Horned God's chambers, waging a hopeless war upon the tyranny of his darkness.

For these sagas to unfold, the participants must themselves be of epic power; or at the very least, they must be on the road to epic power. The classes presented in the **Castles & Crusades Players Handbook** stop at **13th level**. Spellcasters gain more spells with level advancement, and others, such as the fighter, see their abilities improve as their levels continue, but there are no new abilities. This approach safeguarded the story element that is critically important to long-running campaigns, where the story itself is as important as gaining treasure or power. Characters gaining higher levels and the powerful abilities that go along with those levels tend to enter realms of Monty Haul campaigns - games where the fantastic and outrageous become commonplace and dwarf the importance of the adventurers and their tales with the attainment of outlandish, super-human abilities and vast treasures.

The **Players Handbook** never denied that such epic play held a place in the game. Indeed, the greatest stories ever told are epic tales of endurance and struggle, where the mighty fight the mighty and the world is left aghast by their titanic struggles. How impressive would Gandalf be had the Balrog pulled him over the ledge and they both just splattered on the ground below? Epic adventures capture the imagination in a scope that resonates in the collective gaming memory for long years after the struggle.

To achieve epic adventure, three things are necessary: epic-level monsters (see the **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde**), a CK's elbow grease (see Chapter 14), and epic-level player characters. Below are all 13 classes with their necessary experience point progression, the BtH, hit point bonuses, and the abilities associated with levels up through 24. As you read through these, take note that not all the characters are balanced at higher level. Rogues may find it increasingly difficult to hit opponents when compared to their fighter counterparts; some may gain levels faster, and others may have more abilities. We have purposely steered away from making all classes equal to one another, focusing more on making each class' tale its own. The intent is not to create character classes that are so powerful they sweep away mountains, but rather to create character classes whose titanic struggles echo in the gamers' hall for a long time to come.

ASSASSIN

Mercenaries with abilities beyond those of normal warriors, assassins, over time, evolve their skills. They often develop peculiar habits, signatures whereby others can recognize their handiwork. With experience, their knowledge of their targets increases and their ability to kill extends beyond the simple knife in the dark.

ABILITIES

SURPRISE: At **13TH LEVEL**, the assassin's ability to surprise his opponents more often and more successfully increases. Assassins add +1 to those wisdom checks involving surprising an opponent. Assassins do not add this bonus when making their own surprise checks, however. The bonus increases by +1 every five levels; at **18th level**, they surprise at a +2, and at **23rd level** they surprise at +3.

SNEAK ATTACK: At **13th level**, the sneak attack increases to +3 to hit and +6 to damage. At **19th level**, the bonus increases to +4 to hit and +9 to damage; at **23rd level**, it increases to +6 to hit and +12 to damage.

SIGNATURE STYLE: Most adventurers develop certain styles, use of weapons, or tactics with which they are most comfortable. These signature styles, honed to a near-perfect art, define their work and skill; they are a calling card of sorts. At **15th level,** the assassin can perfect a signature style enabling him to more effectively eliminate targets. This only works with one type of attack, whether by weapon, poison, or tactic. The assassin must be familiar with the style, using it frequently throughout his career. It often behooves the player to choose the style at an earlier level, allowing the assassin to immediately utilize the signature style upon achieving **15th level**. Any time the assassin strikes with a death attack with this signature style, he increases his own CL by 2. The target must make a constitution saving throw against the assassin's level +2.

DEXTERITY BONUS: At **15th level**, the assassin's constant need to move quickly through the shadows increases his dexterity by 1 point.

QUICK REACTION: At **18th level**, the assassin adds a +1 to initiative rolls. At **24th level**, this bonus increases to +2. After **24th level**, should the result be an 11 or higher, the assassin can take one more action at the end of the round, such as attacking or moving half the assassin's movement rate. The assassin may only use the additional action to make a ranged attack if a ranged weapon is already in hand. Regular actions, such as rummaging

through a backpack, generally require too much time, so the assassin cannot perform them with the second action. CKs may rule on individual actions; for example, grabbing a pinch of powder from a belt pouch is within reason, while stopping to open a chest and look through its contents is not.

SLOW KILL: At **20th level**, the assassin can utilize his learned skills of anatomy to strike opponents in areas difficult to heal. These wounds bleed profusely, draining the target of energy and life. Upon a successful blow, the opponent takes normal damage from the weapon. In the following round, the target continues to suffer damage from that same blow, losing 1d6 HP in blood loss, whether internal or external. The target continues to lose 1d6 HP a round thereafter unless healed or bandaged. To use this ability, the assassin must strike before the intended target does. Though the ability's results are cumulative, the assassin can only successfully strike any one opponent four times with the slow kill attack; he may attempt a slow kill against a particular target as many times as necessary to make four successful slow kill attacks, however. After four successful attacks, it is assumed the assassin has struck all the victim's vulnerable areas. Slow kill works in conjunction with sneak attack. At **24th level**, an assassin using slow kill causes wounds so severe they heal (even magically) at only half the normal rate and can cause incapacitation, such as loss of the use of a limb. Upon an assassin's successful slow kill attack, the opponent must make a successful constitution check (CL equal to the assassin's level), or he suffers an incapacitating blow and the ability to use a limb (assassin's choice) until healed.

NOTE: This ability does not work on non-bleeding creatures, such as the undead or oozes. Furthermore, it does not work on creatures the assassin has no direct or indirect knowledge about. The Castle Keeper serves as the final arbiter in which creatures the slow kill affects.

TABLE 1.8 ASSASSIN CLASS INFORMATION

Level	HD	BtH	EPP
13	+2	+4	650,001
14	+2	+4	800,001
15	+2	+4	950,001
16	+2	+5	1,100,001
17	+2	+5	1,250,001
18	+2	+5	1,400,001
19	+2	+5	1,550,001
20	+2	+6	1,700,001
21	+1	+6	1,850,001
22	+1	+6	2,000,001
23	+1	+6	2,150,001
24	+1	+7	2,300,001

BARBARIAN

These warriors of the primeval world become titans whose philosophy of blood and iron straddles the world of the civilized and barbaric. These men channel an ever greater power of raw force. In worlds where magic governs so many aspects of the balance, the barbarian's power often falls upon the magical world like an unrivaled force of nature.

ABILITIES

IRON SINEWS: Magic, in all its splendor, falters as the barbarian batters it down with his unbridled power. The barbarian's constitution bonus compounds the force of his blows, allowing him to wield normal weapons as if they were magical. At **13th level**, the barbarian can, with a non-magical weapon, strike a creature requiring magical weapons to be hit. The barbarian's constitution modifier serves as his magical to-hit bonus, so he can only hit creatures within his modifier's bonus range. For instance, a barbarian with a 15 constitution could use a non-magical weapon to strike any creature requiring a +1 or better weapon to be hit; however, his constitution bonus is not high enough to allow him to hit creatures requiring a +2 or better weapon to be hit.

CONSTITUTION BONUS: At **15th level**, the barbarian's mastery of his own will and primeval force increase his constitution by 1 point.

FORCE OF NATURE: The barbarian's core beliefs are rooted in the animal world, where instincts often override reason, particularly the instinct to survive: the primordial spirit overrides all thoughts of suffering or pain and drives the barbarian to struggle against even impossible odds. This struggle to survive knows no odds, and situations do not arise where hopelessness or fate factor into the narrative of life. The barbarian is very blessed, and no matter the source of the power displayed against him, his primeval instincts fight where even reason yields. Over time, these instincts evolve into a natural spell resistance. Beginning at **16th level**, the barbarian gains a natural +2 bonus to SR. For every three levels thereafter, the barbarian gains an additional +1 bonus to SR. For example, at **19th level** the barbarian has a SR of 4. At **22nd level** his SR improves to 5.

WARLORD: The road of adventure brings spoils of many kinds, not the least of which is reputation. At **20th level** a barbarian's reputation resonates throughout the many lands of his conquests. If opportunity presents itself, the barbarian can call up an army of 10-100 **1st level** barbarians. These barbarians have AC 13 and are armed with swords or axes. For every 20 barbarians, there is one **3rd level** barbarian. The barbarian must call up the army in an area where the local communities know his name and his deeds. Furthermore, the area must have a population of 500 for every 10 men called up. These men fight for up to 30 days without pay, requiring only food and water. After that time, the army disbands, unless the barbarian compels them to remain through payment.

The barbarian can normally only use this ability once per month. At the Castle Keeper's discretion it may be used more

often, but many circumstances affect the outcome of the call. For instance, a barbarian who calls up an army and subsequently leads it to disaster may find it more difficult to call up another band later. Repeated failures lead to the loss of this ability until the barbarian regains his reputation.

TABLE 1.9 BARBARIAN CLASS INFORMATION

Level	HD	BtH	EPP
13	+5	+12	1,200,001
14	+5	+13	1,400,001
15	+5	+14	1,600,001
16	+5	+15	1,800,001
17	+5	+16	2,000,001
18	+5	+17	2,200,001
19	+5	+18	2,400,001
20	+3	+19	2,600,001
21	+3	+20	2,800,001
22	+3	+20	3,000,001
23	+3	+20	3,200,001
24	+3	+20	3,400,001

BARD

The bard's abilities of song and lute become only one chord in his mastery of voice, music, and sound and all their power. His chords fire the soul of the willing and brandish iron in the minds of the unwary.

ABILITIES

SWAY CROWD: At **13th level**, the bard's ability to influence others is strong. When he spins tales, whether through his music or voice alone, he can sway all who listen. When the bard uses this ability, anyone listening to him must make a charisma save or be spellbound by his tale or song. The bard simply holds them in rapture, not allowing them to leave his presence so long as he continues to perform; additionally, the crowd remains held for one round per level of the bard even after he ceases to perform. The bard affects up to 20 HD worth of targets at **13th level**. This number exponentially doubles thereafter, so that bards can charm 40 HD worth of targets at **16th level**, 80 HD at **19th level**, and a maximum of 160 HD at **22nd level**. He can affect any human, demi-human, or humanoid creature with his tales or songs, even if he does not speak the language. Lowest HD creatures are affected first.

CHARISMA BONUS: At **15th level**, the bard's mastery of his abilities and his recitations of wonder increase his charisma by 1 point.

WORDS OF POWER: At **17th level**, the bard's ability with song and music allows him to wound creatures like never before. Once a day he can send forth his power. When he does so, his words can harm an enemy. The target must make a successful charisma save or, based upon the target's HD, suffer all the effects below.

LEVEL/HD	EFFECT
4 or less	Death
5-7	Paralysis, Blindness, Deafness
8-11	Blindness, Deafness
12 or more	Deafness

Deafness lasts 1d4 rounds. Blindness lasts 2d4 rounds. Paralysis lasts 1d10 rounds, with the subject being unable to move or act in any way. Death results in the target instantly dying, or if undead, being instantly destroyed.

Using this ability is a standard action; the bard cannot strike with normal weapons or use other abilities while doing so; he must concentrate on his target, precluding most movement. Being attacked, however, does not interrupt the ability. It affects all creatures within 100 feet of the bard.

At **24th level**, the bard can sing even greater words of power; these words carry the weight of the world's legends, and with such, weave a mist of magic around the bard and those nearby. This potent song, pregnant with magic, offers a barrier and shield against other magic, whether natural, illusionary, divine, or arcane. The barrier acts as an *anti-magic shell*, making the area around the bard, up to 40 feet, impervious to magical effects, including spells, spell-like abilities, magic from most items, and supernatural abilities. The bard must be singing or playing an instrument for his words of power to take effect. Any magical effect that enters the area must make a successful charisma save at a CL equal to the bard's level or fail. Further, the words of power erode illusions. On a successful save, the bard overcomes any illusions present, except those that are components of the illusionist's Magnum Opus ability. The time it takes to reverse charms or destroy illusions is equal in rounds to the original caster's level. The bard can use this ability once a week.

RALLY: At **18th level**, the bard's skill offers a cure to fear and disheartening events, and he can rally those who hear his voice or music. Anyone within earshot of the bard's rallying cry can make a save against any type of fear or morale effects (even if they previously failed the save or morale check), including the pall of dragon fear. The bard may rally once per day, and he must be singing, playing, or talking to rally, and taking no other actions that round. Those who rally do not suffer from fear or morale for one round per level of the bard unless extreme circumstances should weaken the rally's effects. The CK is the final arbiter of what might constitute "extreme circumstances." Such events might include witnessing the following: the bard's death, the collapse of an allied army, the massive destruction of people or terrain via magic or natural disaster, the arrival of a deity on the battlefield, or the occurrence of some world-shattering event. In such an instance, the CK may allow a new save, with possible modifiers, for the rally to remain in effect for its full duration.

QUEST: At **20th level**, the bard can use his abilities to lay a quest upon another. The target must make a successful charisma

saving throw or have a *geas* placed upon him. This effect acts in all respects as the *geas* spell.

CHANGE ALIGNMENT: At **22nd level**, the bard can change the alignment of any non-player character he targets. The target must be willing to listen to him, and the process takes time. The bard must be in the company of that person for at least 1 hour per day for a month and be able to communicate with him freely for that length of time. After one month, the target makes a charisma check at a CL equal to the bard's level. If successful, nothing happens, but if the target fails, the target changes alignment one step (chaotic to neutral, for example, or good to neutral). This process goes on for as long as the bard wishes to continue altering the target's alignment. The bard must stay in contact with the recipient, spending at least 1 hour per week with the target. If he does not, every week thereafter, the recipient must make a charisma save to break free of the alignment change; if successful, the alignment change slowly fades, and the target returns to his normal state within several months (one gradation per month).

TABLE 1.10 BARD CLASS INFORMATION

Level	HD	BtH	EPP
13	+4	+12	975,001
14	+4	+12	1,150,001
15	+4	+13	1,325,001
16	+4	+13	1,500,001
17	+2	+13	1,675,001
18	+2	+14	1,850,001
19	+2	+14	2,025,001
20	+2	+14	2,200,001
21	+1	+15	2,375,001
22	+1	+15	2,550,001
23	+1	+15	2,725,001
24	+1	+15	2,900,001

CLERIC

High-level clerics are rare. They are lords and ladies of their deities' wills, and wisdom lies upon the long roads of their careers. In them rests the good or evil of their sect, and they grow to govern it, both literally and figuratively. High-level clerics affect more than the world their feet so readily trod.

ABILITIES

WISDOM BONUS: At **15th level**, the cleric's power in his order and his proven devotion to his deity increase his wisdom by 1 point.

HOLY CAMPAIGN: Once clerics gain **18th level**, they can call for a Holy Campaign. For each follower the clerics have, they can raise 1-10 **0 level** supporters and gather 1-100 0 level peasants to also follow them on whatever campaign they deign important. The campaign must have a defined purpose, such as overthrowing a rival temple or church, liberating a town from an evil tyrant, assaulting a good church to recover an evil text, besieging a forgotten catacomb to recover a lost relic, etc. The campaign lasts for up to one week per point of the cleric's charisma. In battle, these troops receive a +1 bonus to all checks including combat rolls, with the exception of damage, so long as the cleric is present and still active. The point of this ability is not to create a war-game adventure (though that is feasible if using **Fields of Battle**), but to allow the player to call upon an army for a short time to assault an otherwise impenetrable fortress where other adventures can occur and culminating events involving the cleric can happen.

As the cleric advances in levels, the ability to call for a holy campaign increases; at **19th level**, the number of followers doubles, and the bonus increases to +2; and at **23rd level**, it quadruples, with the bonus increasing to +3. For every 20 troops, there will be a **1st level** leader. For every 20 **1st level** troops, there is a **2nd level** leader, and for every 20 second levels, there is a **3rd level** leader, etc.

The Castle Keeper must manage the details of the holy campaign, as the movement and calling up of troops taxes any society, government, or region. Within the CKG are rules for NPCs, followers, loyalty, morale, and warfare. Please refer to those sections for a general idea on how to manage this ability.

PERFECT RECALL: At **20th level**, clerics can recall any previously cast 0-level cleric spells at will. They must make a successful CL 0 wisdom check to recall and cast the spell, and they can only recall a specific spell once that day. For instance, a cleric who successfully recalls an *endure elements* spell he cast earlier may only recall it for one additional casting that day. At **24th level**, clerics can recall any previously cast 1st-level spells at will. They must make a successful wisdom check as with **0 level** spells.

DIVINE MONOLITH: At **22nd level**, the cleric is such a paragon of her deity that she constantly emanates an aura of holy or unholy energy. The high-level cleric radiates a *magic circle* in a 20-foot radius that does the following: the cleric is immune to all death attacks, including but not limited to those by spell, item, class abilities, and poison. The cleric gains a +3 to all turn checks within the radius of divine monolith. The cleric gains +2 to all attributes checks and saves. This spell-like ability cannot be dispelled or dismissed, and it has a permanent duration.

BANISH: At **21st level** the cleric gains the ability to banish extra-planar creatures. Banish acts like turn undead and the cleric must make a successful wisdom check to banish the target creature or creatures. The banishment drives the target creature from the material plane. It cannot immediately return. For every level of the cleric, the banished creature must linger on the outside for at least 1 day. A **21st level** cleric banishes a creature for 21 days, etc.

MARK OF THE SAINT: At **23rd level**, the cleric's order, sect, or deity recognizes her as a saint - no matter the cleric's

alignment. The cleric's word becomes law to the faithful. Lower ranking members of the order flock to the saint's side. The saint gains 1d10 followers per point of wisdom. For every 10 followers gathering at the cleric's call, a 1st-level cleric heeds the call, as well. When 40 followers have been attracted, a cleric of at least **4th level** is also attracted. When 80 followers gather, a cleric of **8th level** joins the saint. When over 100 followers have gathered, a **10th level** cleric is attracted. The saint must have a church, abbey, temple or some other consecrated site for the faithful to gather, or she loses these followers. These followers are in addition to those mentioned previously, and they are different in that they are of undying loyalty, never question their purpose, and are quite willing and eager to lay down their lives in the name of the sainted cleric.

As with all followers, these require maintenance and must be housed and fed. Refer to Chapter 4 for more details on cost of hirelings.

But Sainthood has other benefits, as well. The saint gains additional spells over her standard allotment. Once a week, without recourse to prayer, the Saint can cast *heal*, *cure blindness*, and *cure disease*; once per day, she can *create holy water*. In addition to these properties, the saint may speak a *holy/unholy* word once per day to drive away evil or good, and once per week, she can return the dead to the living realm with *resurrection*.

TABLE 1.11 CLERIC CLASS INFORMATION

Level	HD	BtH	EPP
13	+3	+6	1,150,001
14	+3	+6	1,400,001
15	+3	+6	1,650,001
16	+3	+7	1,900,001
17	+3	+7	2,150,001
18	+3	+7	2,400,001
19	+3	+7	2,650,001
20	+1	+8	2,900,001
21	+1	+8	3,150,001
22	+1	+8	3,400,001
23	+1	+8	3,650,001
24	+1	+9	3,900,001

TABLE 1.12 SPELL CONTINUATION

Level	Spell Level								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
21	6	6	6	5	5	5	4	4	3
22	7	6	6	6	5	5	4	4	3
23	7	6	6	6	5	5	5	4	4
24	7	7	6	6	6	6	5	4	4

DRUID

Long journeys in their wilderness domains bring druids into a symbiotic relationship with their environments. They gain greater knowledge of flora and fauna, master the elements, and learn the wisdom of creatures great and small.

ABILITIES

ADVANCED NATURE LORE: At **13th level**, this ability allows the druid to expand their knowledge of flora and fauna to cover another region or regional type. This functions identically to the **1st level** Nature Lore ability, except the druid may use any and all abilities of Nature Lore in the new region or regional type, including gathering food. At **21st level**, the druid gains a third area of expertise.

ADVANCED RESIST ELEMENTS: This functions identically to the **2nd level** *resist elements* special ability. At **13th level**, the druid's resist elements modifier increases to +3. This modifier increases to +4 at **18th level** and to +5 at **22nd level**.

WISDOM BONUS: At **15th level**, embracing the indifferent power of nature and learning to channel it both combine to increase the druid's wisdom by 1 point.

DISMISS WOODLAND CREATURES: At **18th level**, the druid gains the ability to dismiss any wilderness creatures falling into the following categories: animal, beast, plant, or vermin. The creatures must be native to one of the regions of the druid's Nature Lore for the druid to be able to dismiss them. To successfully dismiss creatures, the druid must make a charisma check at a CL equal to the total number of HD of creatures to be dismissed. Each day, at no penalty, the druid can dismiss a number of hit dice worth of creatures equal to 10 plus his charisma bonus. Creatures flee from the druid, leaving the area and not returning until after the druid departs.

Example: Morgana, an **18th level** druid, has a charisma of 17. Charisma is not a prime attribute for Morgana. She encounters two owlbears (5HD) destroying a field she particularly enjoys lounging in. Morgana attempts to dismiss the creatures. Morgana needs to roll a 28 to dismiss both creatures (CB 18 + 10 for their combined HD). She has +20 for her level and attribute bonus. Any roll of eight or better successfully dismisses the creatures.

PERFECT RECALL: At **20th level**, druids can recall any previously cast 0-level druid spells at will. They must make a successful CL 0 wisdom check to recall and cast the spell, and they can only recall a specific spell once that day. For instance, a druid who successfully recalls a *create water* spell he cast earlier may only recall it for one additional casting that day. At **24th level**, druids can recall any previously cast 1st-level druid spells at will. They must make a successful wisdom check as with **0 level** spells.

ELEMENTAL MASTERY: At **20th level**, this ability confers immunity to the damaging effects of one of the following: fire,

heat, electricity, ice, cold, earth, water, or air. The player must choose the element. Any spell-based attacks using the druid's chosen element to cause damage no longer affect the druid. For example, should a druid choose resistance to fire, *fireball* spells no longer cause damage to the druid; furthermore, the druid can walk through fire without taking any damage. Likewise, a *cone of cold* no longer affects a druid who has selected to resist ice or cold.

With this mastery, comes control of that one element, as well. When attacked with spells of his selected element, the druid can make a successful wisdom save at a CL equal to the attacker's HD or level to counter attack his opponent. If successful, the druid gathers the force of the attack and hurls it back at a target of the druid's choosing, including the wielder, doing damage equal to the attack's original damage. For example, a 6-dice *fireball* spell would cause 6d6 points of damage against the caster or the druid's chosen target. The selected target must, of course, be within the spell's range as starting from the druid.

LANGUAGE OF THE WILDERLAND: At **21st level**, druids master the language of all birds, beasts, trees, and all growing things. "Speaking" with these creatures or plants does not involve normal talking, but rather an understanding of their method of communication. These beings might communicate through sounds (not words), motion, or even via a sort of communion. CKs should decide the being's appropriate vehicle of communication. Most creatures have low intelligence and little understanding of the world as understood by the various races, so unless made aware or awakened, they can only relate things in very simple ideas and with a limited understanding of events or things they encounter. For instance, a tree might relay to the druid that something hit its stem and hurt its bark, thereby draining its sap - and it might communicate this by rustling its leaves and moving its branches; a tree, however, would not be able to impart what that something looked like, smelled like, or be able to provide much more information about it.

AWAKEN WOODLAND SERVANT: At **24th level**, druids develop a deep bond with the natural world through which they walk. Long experience has taught them the language of things, both plant and animal, and has given them a deep understanding of these beings. Druids can awaken both flora and fauna, making them aware of the greater world around them and unleashing a level of consciousness on par with that of humans, elves, and dwarves. The awakened plants or animals can see the world, hear it, touch it, feel it, and voice their thoughts about their experience of it. Druids must spend several days with the creature for it to achieve the awakening.

The druid can communicate perfectly with the awakened creature or plant, and it can actually speak in the druid's native tongue and can clearly confer its life's experiences to the druid. An empathetic bond develops between the druid and the being, and it always looks favorably upon the druid, so long as the druid does not abuse or cause it harm. The being will fight for and defend the druid if necessary. If possible, the awakened being stays with and serves the druid as best it can for as long as the druid desires. After it leaves or is dismissed, it retains a deep-seated loyalty to the druid for its life's duration.

Furthermore, awakened creatures or plants are empowered, their new-found knowledge granting them strength and endurance beyond their normal ken. Such awakened beings receive two additional HD; maximum hit points; and a +2 bonus to their armor class, all damage rolls, and all saving throws.

This ability increases as the druid gains levels. For every two levels after **24th level**, druids can awaken one more animal or plant. Hit dice measure the maximum number of beings druids can have under their command. Druids can have a maximum of 5 times their charisma attribute score in hit dice under their command. For example, a druid with a 12 charisma could have up to 60 HD of creatures under her command.

TABLE 1.13 DRUID CLASS INFORMATION

Level	HD	BtH	EPP
13	+3	+6	825,001
14	+3	+6	1,000,001
15	+3	+6	1,175,001
16	+3	+7	1,350,001
17	+3	+7	1,525,001
18	+3	+7	1,700,001
19	+3	+7	1,875,001
20	+1	+8	2,050,001
21	+1	+8	2,225,001
22	+1	+8	2,400,001
23	+1	+8	2,575,001
24	+1	+9	2,750,001

TABLE 1.14 SPELL CONTINUATION

Level	Spell Level								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
21	6	6	6	5	5	5	4	4	3
22	7	6	6	6	5	5	4	4	3
23	7	6	6	6	5	5	5	4	4
24	7	7	6	6	6	6	5	4	4

FIGHTER

Fighters continue to hone their skills in battle as they advance in levels. Long years of experience through many grueling combats allow them to understand the use o weapons and armor. Even beyond that, their experience translates into something similar to instinctive response when in individual combat. Masters of individual combat tactics, they dominate the fields of interpersonal combat. Furthermore, their long years of use hone their attributes, improving their muscles and reflexes.

ABILITIES

BATTLE SPACE: At **13th level**, fighters gain greater control over their battle space. Through use of peripheral vision, anticipation of their rival's maneuvers, and a clear understanding of the advantages and limitations of their equipment, experienced fighters develop a keen, almost instinctive, understanding of their battle space. This allows fighters to coordinate their own defensive and offensive actions in such a way that if they carry a second weapon, use a shield, or even use something as simple as a chair leg, they can use it defensively, without it affecting the use of their primary weapon. This grants fighters a +1 bonus to their AC. This bonus does not apply if the fighter is using any two-handed weapon, such as a pole-arm, bow, crossbow, etc. It does stack with the shield bonus, so use of a shield and Battle Space would grant an extra 2 to AC, one for the shield and one for the Battle Space ability.

At **17th level**, the fighter's control of his battle space increases, allowing him to better master combat maneuvers. He gains the following bonuses: dodge +3, disengage -1, evade +5, flank +2, and a rear attack +3. At **22nd level**, another increase occurs: dodge+4, disengage 0, evade +6, flank +3, and a rear attack +4.

ADVANCED WEAPON SPECIALIZATION: At **13th level**, a fighter chooses a second weapon for specialization. This ability is identical to the 1st-level Weapon Specialization ability. The ability imparts a +1 to hit and +1 to damage bonus when using the second chosen weapon. At **19th level**, the bonuses increase to +2 to hit and +2 to damage. The fighter can choose to double specialize in the weapon initially chosen for specialization at **1st level**; doing so grants the fighter a +3 to hit and +3 to damage at **13th level** and +4 to hit and +4 to damage at **19th level**.

SHIELD BLOW: At **14th level**, fighters can employ medium or large metal shields as weapons. Combining the weight of the shield with their skill, they can strike an opponent with the shield. Upon a successful strike, the victim suffers 1d6 points of damage with a large shield, or 1d4 points of damage with a medium shield. The shield does not count as a second weapon; therefore, the fighter does not suffer to-hit penalties when using the shield, but when the shield is used offensively, it also does not confer its standard AC bonus. This ability is in addition to the fighter's Extra Attack ability gained at 10th level, effectively allowing him three swings a round if employing a shield, and it augments the Battle Space ability when using the shield. It does not add any extra attacks if the fighter is using Combat Dominance. Buckler and small shields are too small and light to bash, while the pavis is too large and heavy.

STRENGTH BONUS: At **15th level**, the fighter's long use of armor and weapons and his combat experience increase his strength by 1 point.

ADVANCED COMBAT DOMINANCE: This ability functions identically to the 4th-level Combat Dominance ability. At **16th level** this ability functions on 2-HD creatures. At **20th level** this ability functions on 3-HD creatures, and at **24th level** this ability functions on 4-HD creatures.

ATTRIBUTE BONUS: At **19th level**, the fighter gains either 1 point in strength or dexterity.

TABLE 1.15 FIGHTER CLASS INFORMATION

Level	HD	BtH	EPP
13	+4	+13	1,250,001
14	+4	+14	1,500,001
15	+4	+15	1,750,001
16	+4	+16	2,000,001
17	+4	+17	2,250,001
18	+4	+18	2,500,001
19	+4	+19	2,750,001
20	+2	+20	3,000,001
21	+2	+20	3,250,001
22	+2	+20	3,500,001
23	+2	+20	3,750,001
24	+2	+20	4,000,001

ILLUSIONIST

The borders between what is real and what is not blur to the long-experienced illusionist; reality becomes little more than a state of mind. This blurring of reality allows the illusionist to see where others cannot and to hear the essence of things.

ABILITIES

SEE INVISIBLE: At **13th level**, the Illusionist has learned to distinguish shades of light, and because of this, has a chance to see any invisible object or person. The illusionist must make a successful intelligence check to see the invisible object or

person; even then, the illusionist does not see the object as if wholly revealed, for the illusionist can only ascertain its general location and movement. Periodic attribute checks are required to continue viewing it. There is no time limit on this ability; it works continuously. At **18th level**, the illusionist's abilities improve so that, after a successful check, they can ascertain the shape and size of the target. At **24th level** the master illusionist's innate ability to distinguish the real from the unreal reaches a supernatural level. The illusionist gains a second sight, and may permanently see the reality of things as per the *true seeing* spell.

INTELLIGENCE BONUS: At **15th level**, the illusionist's mastery of the real and unreal, what constitutes the ethereal world of magic and the tactile world of the mundane, increases his intelligence by 1 point.

DETECT MAGIC: Starting at **16th level**, the illusionist's long career allows him to detect the telltale signs of magic without casting a spell; after five rounds of study and concentration, he can see the essence of an item, determining whether or not it is magical. With a successful intelligence check, the illusionist can ascertain the magic's origins, whether made by dwarves, elves, ancient civilizations, etc. This aspect of the ability presupposes the illusionist has encountered this type of magic before. An item crafted by the ancient Ethrum will not reveal itself to an illusionist even if he makes a successful intelligence check if that illusionist has not previously encountered magic from the ancient Kingdom of Ethrum. At **18th level**, the illusionist can determine the power of the item, whether great or small, as well as its nature in so far as its importance to a people, history, cult, or similar entity.

CHANGE SELF: At **19th level**, illusionists have so long walked in the worlds of illusion that they may now alter their own persons, shaping themselves into a different guise, shape, or form. Illusionists may change self as the spell once per day. Unlike the spell, however, this innate ability allows them to alter their racial appearance as well as the smell, sound, and even the tactile sensations of their new identity. Additionally, the effect lasts until the illusionist dispels it.

PERFECT RECALL: At **20th level**, illusionists can recall any previously cast 0-level illusionist spells at will. Recalled spells allow illusionists to cast spells beyond their regular allotment. They must make a successful intelligence check (CL 0) to recall and cast the spell, and they can only recall a specific spell once that day. For instance, an illusionist who successfully recalls a *ghost sound* spell he cast earlier may only recall it for one additional casting that day. At **24th level**, illusionists can recall any previously cast 1st-level spells at will. They must make a successful intelligence check as with 0-level spells.

MAGNUM OPUS: At **24th level**, illusionists master their magnum opus, the height of their spell-casting prowess. In a day-long ritual drawing power from the plane of shadow and combining the spells *distort reality, mirage arcana, permanent image, polymorph any object*, and *shades*, master illusionists blend what lies in their mind's eye with that of the world around them. Magnum opus allows the illusionist to create any one object or being, or one area up to 10 ft. by 10 ft. per level, with this ritual. An illusionist can create a being up to half his level in HD. It possesses all the powers a normal creature of its type would. For instance, if a manticore is created, it can fly, shoot spikes, etc. The illusion reflects perfection; so great is the power of the illusion that it cannot be dispelled for 1 day per level of the caster, except by a wizard or illusionist of equal or greater abilities. The ritual blends the line between reality and phantasm; the illusionist's power breathes life into the illusion. The ritual effect has a 1% chance per the illusionist's level to become real. If the image becomes real, it cannot be dispelled or disbelieved, and a paladin's cleanse soul ability will not reveal it as ever having been an illusion.

Example: An illusory sword created to slay a powerful monster may indeed become a physical object; a landscape created by this ritual may become a real place, with all thermal and environmental conditions present. A "person" created by this spell has a chance of becoming a real, living, breathing being. The master illusionists Cascalian and her brother Priussan are said to be products of this ritual; each claims to be the true "person," while the other is the result of the ritual taking on a life of its own.

Illusionists may only attempt the magnum opus once per month. They must spend a day in the casting and remain undisturbed. Unless the illusion becomes real, illusionists can only have one magnum opus at a time.

TABLE 1.16 ILLUSIONIST CLASS INFORMATION

Level	HD	BtH	EPP
13	+1	+3	1,050,001
14	+1	+4	1,200,001
15	+1	+4	1,350,001
16	+1	+4	1,500,001
17	+1	+4	1,650,001
18	+1	+4	1,800,001
19	+1	+4	1,950,001
20	+1	+4	2,100,001
21	+1	+4	2,250,001
22	+1	+5	2,400,001
23	+1	+5	2,550,001
24	+1	+5	2,700,001

TABLE 1.17 SPELL CONTINUATION

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
21	7	7	6	6	5	5	4	4	3
22	7	7	6	6	5	5	4	4	3
23	8	7	7	6	6	5	5	4	4
24	8	7	7	6	6	5	5	4	4

KNIGHT

The knight's knowledge of war increases with time and experience; the application of this knowledge allows him to master the art of war, improving his leadership skills as well as his personal combat skills. Epic knights begin to set aside their normal desires for adventure in favor of becoming Lords of Men.

Note: Knights are excellent troop leaders, and their skills are very much suited to mass combat. The epic powers listed below are excellent additions to any **Fields of Battle** mass-combat game. In addition, embedded epic knights provide other powers to their troops, as described in **Fields of Battle**. Also, note that the knight as presented here in the **Castle Keepers Guide** was not available at the time of the boxed set's release, so these powers were not drawn upon for embedded knights.

ABILITIES

EXPERT IN ARMS: The knight's experience in the art of war consumes his waking hours, and the battlefield hones his skills in the use of weapons and armor. But his thoughts, ever geared toward tactics and leadership, are not squandered on improving his own abilities, but rather are more attuned to utilizing the skills of others. At **13th level**, during any combat where the knight is fighting alongside others, such as friends or allies, he can exert himself for one round, thereby improving the combat maneuvers of the party or group with him. All allies within 40 feet of the knight gain a +1 bonus to any combat maneuver, including those from **Fields of Battle**. However, the knight must take command of the group to provide this bonus. Any group member failing to follow the knight's orders does not receive the bonus. When the knight achieves **17th level**, the bonus improves to +2. This bonus stacks with any other in-place bonuses benefiting characters or NPCs, including the fighter's battle space ability. It does not improve the knight's bonus.

CHARISMA BONUS: At **15th level**, the knight's knowledge of the battlefield and his natural lordship over men increase his charisma by 1 point.

HONOR ATTACK: At **17th level**, knights can deal an honor attack. In any formal situation, such as a joust, one-on-one combat, or any fight in which knights are involved in individual combat, they can call upon their noble spirit to disconcert their foe. So long as the battle is nobly fought and the knight does not yield or retreat, the knight's renown disconcerts his foe so much that it reduces his opponent's AC by the knight's charisma modifier for the honor attack. In that round, the knight can strike a blow, adding his charisma modifier, if any, to his to-hit roll and dealing double his normal damage, to include strength and magical modifiers. The knight can only do this once during any one combat fought between him and one other creature. The knight can use the honor attack multiple times each day, but only once against the same target.

BATTLE LORD: At **20th level**, the knight achieves a level of battlefield mastery that allows him to influence his troops as never before; men look to him for guidance and act upon his cues. All mass-combat rolls receive the knight's charisma bonus to their to-hit and damage rolls and provide allies with a +1 to their armor class. Furthermore, any troops of men, great or small, required to make a morale check add the knight's charisma modifier to their roll. The troops must be able to see the knight upon the field. The knight must place himself prominently upon the field, fight and lead vigorously. If the knight leaves the battle due to wounds or by choice, the modifier is lost. If the knight dies, the troops must make a morale roll in the following round. The knight's charisma bonus is no longer in effect; furthermore, the knight's death demoralizes the men, and they consequently suffer a -4 penalty on their morale checks. At **24th level**, the knight's attack bonus equals double the knight's charisma bonus, and it provides a +2 bonus to the allied troops' armor class and a +2 bonus to the morale of those who can see him on the battlefield. Player characters are not affected by the knight's battle lord ability.

CONVERSION TO KNIGHTHOOD: At **21st level**, knights gain the extraordinary ability to confer knighthood upon chosen NPCs. Converts must desire the knighthood and act courageously. They must also be of like alignment with the knight (good or evil, lawful or chaotic) and be aware of the knight's own renown.

NPCs without classes, such as peasants, become 1st-level knights that are bound to the knight. They must obey him and follow the knightly code even under dangerous circumstances, or the knight will strip them of their knighthood. These knights advance in level according to their own experiences and gain a permanent +1 bonus on their to-hit rolls and armor class.

NPCs with classes must choose whether or not they will continue in their normal class or take up the new role of knight at **1st level**. It is important to note that not all knights begin their career this way. If the knight confers knighthood upon the NPC, treat the character as being multi-classed. These knights do not gain the to-hit and armor class bonuses given to classless NPCs.

Breaking the code of knighthood is a serious offense to the granting knight. The granting knight must hunt down and either slay the offending knight or force him to atone for his offense.

PATH OF GREATNESS: This is a permanent ability and one the knight must choose to take. He can choose to take his path to greatness at **24th level**. The knight is now of such great renown and so powerful that he has become legendary. The knight is emblematic of a desire, hope, or dream. The knight may never back down from a fight or challenge no matter how great or small, and must strike with righteous fury at everything dishonoring or opposing him personally. When in a fight against stronger opponents, the knight receives the HD/level differentiation as a bonus to his to-hit and damage rolls. Furthermore, once a month, the knight can alter the weather as the *control weather* spell, casting as a 10th-level spellcaster. Those friends and allies who can see him or are aware of him

never suffer from poor morale, and they do not flee so long as he remains on the battlefield. Creatures of animal or lower intelligence or anyone of half the knight's level must make a successful charisma or intelligence check, or they shun the knight, refusing to attack him; and if he approaches them, they flee before his righteousness.

If a knight on the path of greatness ever shows cowardice in the face of adversity, quits the field, or flees in the face of certain death, his path is ruined, and he loses all of his knightly abilities, becoming a normal fighter of equal level. They do not possess fighter abilities but retain their hit points.

TABLE 1.18 KNIGHT CLASS INFORMATION

Level	HD	BtH	EPP
13	+4	+12	1,075,001
14	+4	+13	1,250,001
15	+4	+14	1,425,001
16	+2	+15	1,600,001
17	+2	+15	1,775,001
18	+2	+16	1,950,001
19	+2	+16	2,125,001
20	+2	+16	2,300,001
21	+1	+16	2,475,001
22	+1	+17	2,650,001
23	+1	+17	2,825,001
24	+1	+17	3,000,001

MONK

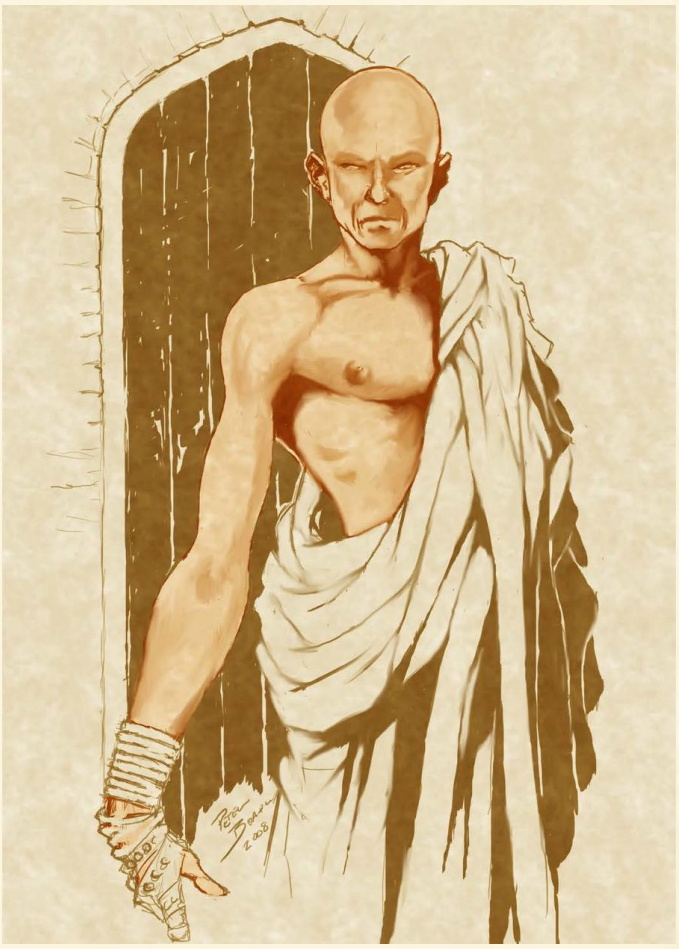
The monk's manifold abilities improve as already noted in the **Players Handbook**, but, at higher levels, they continue to evolve, allowing the monk to learn new skills and master battle techniques. With experience, the monk's body becomes honed to rapid action, and he can use the world around him to his advantage.

ABILITIES

DEFLECT BLOW: At **13th level**, the monk gains the ability to deflect a blow when struck. To do so, the monk must make a dexterity check at a CL equal to or greater than the opponent's BtH. If successful, the monk deflects the blow completely. An attempt to deflect a weapon counts as a monk's primary unarmed attack. This ability does not work against ranged attacks, spells, or breath weapons.

CONSTITUTION BONUS: At **15th level**, the monk's mastery of mind over body increases his constitution by 1 point.

CATCH WEAPON: Once a round, at **17th level**, the monk can attempt to catch a weapon in combat. To do so, the monk must make a normal attack using his dexterity instead of his strength. The monk must successfully hit an armor class of 15 + the opponent's BtH to catch a weapon. If successful, the monk



has grabbed whatever the opponent is holding, or has caught it in mid-air. In the following round, the monk can attempt to wrench it from his opponent's hand by making a constitution check. For the opponent to do the same, he must make a successful strength check. The target can release the weapon at any time, as the monk is holding the weapon, not the wielder. The wielder can use any of the weapon's magical effects while the monk is holding it.

QUICK REACTION: At **18th level**, monks add +1 to their initiative roll. At **24th level**, this bonus increases to +2. After **24th level**, should the result be an 11 or higher, monks can take one more action at the end of the round, such as attacking or moving half their movement rate. Monks may only make a ranged attack if they have a ranged weapon already in hand. Regular actions, such as rummaging through a backpack, generally require too much time, so the monk cannot perform them with the second action. CKs may rule on individual actions; for example, grabbing a pinch of powder from a belt pouch is within reason; stopping to open a chest and look through its contents is not.

WEAPONRY MASTER: At **20th level**, monks can hone their weapons skill. They can choose one weapon to master, learning to use it to its fullest extent. When using the mastered weapon, the monk receives a +1 to all to-hit, damage, and attribute rolls. In effect, the weapon becomes a part of the monk, allowing

him to reach further and faster than normal; where before he broke his fall with his own hands and feet, now he uses the weapon as a tool to slow his descent, enhancing his attributes. Furthermore, the weapon becomes an extension of the monk, allowing him to extend the reach of his extraordinary abilities; with the weapon in hand, the monk can stun, deflect missiles, slow fall, and launch a death strike.

Example: Karaghi chooses the staff for his weapon mastery. While moving through the ruins of an old monastery up the Pig's Trail from the Mistbane River, he encounters a group of orcs. The orcs immediately launch a volley of arrows at him. He attempts to deflect them, and with a successful dexterity save, knocks two of them aside with his staff, the staff being an extension of his deflect missiles ability. He then uses the staff to pole vault up on a broken wall. He runs the length of the wall, and then drops down into a roofless corridor using the staff as a balance bar. Running the length of the corridor, he vaults up and out of it at the end of the corridor, all the while using the staff as an extension of his abilities; it also enhances all his attribute checks by +1.

TABLE 1.19 MONK CLASS INFORMATION

LVL	HD	BTH	EPP
13	+5	+12	1,500,001
14	+5	+12	1,750,001
15	+5	+13	2,000,001
16	+5	+13	2,250,001
17	+6	+13	2,500,001
18	+6	+14	2,750,001
19	+6	+14	3,000,001
20	+6	+14	3,250,001
21	+6	+14	3,500,001
22	+1	+15	3,750,001
23	+1	+15	4,000,001
24	+1	+15	4,250,001

TABLE 1.20 MONK SPECIAL ABILITIES

LEVEL	ARMOR CLASS	PRIMARY ATTACK	SECONDARY ATTACK	TERTIARY ATTACK	MOVE
13	15	1d10	1d8		60
14	15	1d10	1d8		60
15	16	1d10	1d8		60
16	16	1d10	1d8	1d4	60
17	16	1d10	1d8	1d4	60
18	16	1d10	1d10	1d4	60
19	16	1d10	1d10	1d6	60
20	17	1d10	1d10	1d6	60
21	17	1d10	1d10	1d6	60
22	17	1d10	1d10	1d6	60
23	17	1d10	1d10	1d8	60
24	17	1d10	1d10	1d8	60

PALADIN

The paladin exemplifies the holy champion, a noble warrior-priest without peer. Evil fears the paladin, shunning his very presence, but the distraught turn to him for succor. His long road leads him to the halls of sainthood.

ABILITIES

BEQUEATH VIRTUE: The essence of law and good graces every paladin. At **13th level**, this grace manifests as a virtue which the paladin passes on to small items of great beauty, such as flowers, a maiden's hair, garments of silk or soft cottons, and other such innocuous items. These items become imbued with a calming goodness, which immediately soothes the soul of the person to whom the paladin bestows the item. The item's enchantment lays a guise of healing upon the person, passing the grace as a virtue on to the individual. So long as the person is at rest, they heal at double the normal rate up to half the paladin's hit points before it loses its grace and wilts. Furthermore, the virtue can bring someone back from negative hit points. After holding a virtuous item for 24 hours, any individual who has between -1 and -5 hit points returns to zero hit points. They can make one virtuous item a day and the paladin can only have a number of virtuous items equal to their level, at any given time. Every time the paladin bequeaths an item, they temporarily lose a point of constitution that requires one day to heal; magical healing has no effect on this restoration. The item itself wilts after it passes its virtue on unless the paladin chooses to permanently lose a point of constitution; in this case, the virtue and its effects are permanent.

Example: Angrod's battle with the ogre went poorly. With a great blow, the ogre split Angrod's helm, delivering a grievous wound to the dwarf's skull, dropping Angrod to -5 hit points. His companion, Merrick, brings him to the Temple of St. Luther, where the elder paladins see to Angrod's care. The Lord Paladin there bequeaths virtue to a golden coin and places the coin in Angrod's hand. The paladins then allow the dwarf to rest for 24 hours, after which Angrod's hit points rise to zero. His friend Merrick lays on hands for 2 additional points of healing, bringing Angrod back to the land of the living. The Lord Paladin who bequeathed the coin suffers the loss of one point of constitution, but by the following day, the point has returned.

When a paladin reaches the **18th level**, his bequeath ability extends to -7; when he reaches **20th level**, it extends to -9. The virtue stops all bleeding as well as heals the one holding the virtue. Also, at **20th level**, the paladin can reverse the effects of aging. He can imbue an item with such restful virtue that it lays a deep enchantment of sleep upon it. Anyone so willing sleeps for a full year, and in that time, the sleeper regains five years of life as if he were five years younger. The paladin temporarily suffers 5 points of constitution loss each time he uses this ability; each constitution point requires 1 month to heal.

The paladin cannot personally use these items, nor may any other paladins.

DIVINE INTERVENTION: At **13th level**, the paladin achieves a rank in the hierarchy of his order that draws the attention of the deity, allowing the paladin to call upon the deity for aid. The paladin may call upon divine intervention for one of three following purposes:

1. The intervention allows the paladin to re-roll *one* dice roll. The dice roll is restricted to the following: to-hit, damage, saving throw, turning undead or attribute check.
2. The intervention grants the paladin a +4 bonus to hit and doubles any damage for 1 round. The divine aid surpasses any magical resistances the creature may have.
3. The intervention reduces all the damage the paladin suffers in that round by half; the intervention surpasses any magical effects in the area.

The paladin can use this ability once a week at **13th level**, twice a week at **17th level**, and 3 times a week at **22nd level**.

ADVANCED AURA OF COURAGE: This functions identically to the **6th level** Aura of Courage special ability, except for an increase in range. At **15th level**, the range extends to 30 feet. At **20th level**, the range extends to 50 feet.

ADVANCED SMITE EVIL: This ability functions identically to the **9th level** Smite Evil special ability, except for the number of times per day it can be used. At **15th level** the paladin can use this ability twice per day, and three times per day at **20th level**.

CHARISMA BONUS: At **15th level**, the paladin's holiness, the light that shines from within, increases his charisma by 1 point.

DIVINE WILL: At **20th level**, the paladin earns the right to compel others to engage in holy acts or call for a holy war. Once per month, the paladin can exert himself and force any who can hear his voice to take up whatever cause he calls upon them to do. Individual CKs must determine how many can hear the paladin's voice; in very noisy environments, only as few as a half-dozen may hear his call; if an army quietly listens to the paladin, then his call may compel many hundreds to join him.

Recipients of this divine will suffer as if *geased* unless they make a successful charisma check at a CL equal to the paladin's level. Not all the restrictions of a *geas* apply to the divine will, for those compelled willingly put themselves into harmful situations, and if so called upon, they willingly sacrifice their lives. The *geas* only lasts as many days as the paladin has levels unless some outside force dispels it (such as *dispel magic* cast upon the targets), or the paladin himself dispels it.

Divine Will does not affect chaotic, neutral, or lawful evil creatures, NPCS, or player characters.

CLEANSE SOUL: The **24th level** paladin gains mastery over other men's minds. This ability reveals deception and alignment, penetrates any disguise or illusion, reads minds, can lift charms or any other bemusements, dispels magic, and exorcises evil from those unnaturally possessed. The power lays the dead to rest, atones for actions, and allows the paladin to commune with others.

Upon attempting to cleanse soul, the paladin must constrain the target for a number of rounds equal to the target's HD or level and make a successful charisma check at a CL equal to the target's HD or level, with any applicable bonuses. The paladin must also overcome the target's spells resistance, if any. If successful, the paladin automatically knows the target's state of mind. He can detect his alignment (good, evil, chaotic, neutral, or any combination); knows his state of mind, whether angry or fearful; he can see through any illusions; the paladin can detect if the target is under any mind-altering spell or spell-like effect; he can read the creature's thoughts, seeing the target's origins, hopes, fears and dreams; in short, the paladin sees out of the target's eyes and knows the target for who and what he is, no matter the deceptions.

Once cleanse soul reveals the full scope of the creature to the paladin, he may choose to exorcise the creature. If he successfully does so, the paladin forces any madness or evil out of the host. Many targets die from such an event, but others the paladin wholly cures, bringing them back to the path of the righteous. The recipient of the cleansing must make a successful charisma save at a CL equal to the paladin's level, or he succumbs to the paladin's power. Inherently evil creatures, such as vampires, demons, or devils, are completely destroyed by the cleansing. Others, such as lycanthropes, are cured by the cleansing. The dead, such as wraiths, ghosts, and specters, gain eternal peace, and their souls are released from bondage - unless they were evil in life - in which case, they are banished to whatever hell awaits them. Any creature who survives the exorcism casts the paladin out of its mind and is freed from all the effects of the cleanse soul, including the paladin's ability to know the target's true self. Thereafter, the paladin can never again attempt to cleanse soul on that creature.

The paladin must rest one hour for every hit dice of the creature he cleanses or attempts to cleanse. The rest must come immediately after, for the cleansing drains the paladin of his fortitude. He is bedridden and unable to fend for himself during this rest.

TABLE 1.21 PALADIN CLASS INFORMATION

Lvl	HD	BtH	EPP
13	+4	+12	1,600,001
14	+4	+12	1,900,001
15	+4	+13	2,200,001
16	+4	+13	2,500,001
17	+4	+14	2,800,001
18	+4	+14	3,100,001
19	+4	+15	3,400,001
20	+2	+15	3,700,001
21	+2	+16	4,000,001
22	+2	+16	4.300,001
23	+2	+17	4,600,001
24	+2	+17	4,900,001

RANGER

Understanding the wilderness is a constantly evolving skill. The ranger's ability to etch a living out of even the most inhospitable environments, find paths through strange country, and to pursue an enemy with deadly intent all continue to grow with experience. A ranger's high-level abilities reflect this deepening knowledge. The ranger's combat skills do not grow as rapidly at these levels, for the ranger's true gifts lie in his wilderness abilities.

ABILITIES

FIND PASSAGE: At **13th level**, the rangers' wilderness skills allow them to find the least obstructed method of moving through an environment. This does not equate to finding secret passages or even paths. Find passage allows rangers to examine their environment, and through their knowledge of the natural order of things, find the easiest way forward. Find passage allows rangers to halve any movement penalties existing for any terrain. This ability also applies to their climbing ability. In order to use this ability, rangers must have some experience in the terrain, and the terrain itself must be terrestrial. Anyone traveling with the ranger can follow the way, but not as skillfully; their penalties are reduced by one-fourth the normal penalty.

ADVANCED FAVORED ENEMY: This ability functions identically to the **6th level** Favored Enemy ability. At **13th level**, the to-hit and damage rolls against the ranger's favored enemy increase to +3/+3. Furthermore, at **20th level**, rangers can intimidate their favored enemies with a successful charisma check; successfully intimidated enemies become disconcerted while battling the ranger, suffering a -2 penalty to all to-hit, damage, and attribute check rolls. Rangers cannot intimidate more than 15 favored enemies at a time.

EXPERT TRAPPER: At **13th level** the ranger's ability to spot traps increases to a +3 bonus. Furthermore, the ranger can create traps that cause 2d4 points of damage and can trap or ensnare large animals. At **18th level**, this ability increases to a +4 bonus to detect traps and 3d4 points of damage; at **24th level**, it increases to a +6 bonus to detect traps and 4d4 points of trap damage. Rangers can only detect traps in wilderness environments, and they cannot detect magical traps.

SURVIVAL INSTINCTS: At **15th level**, the ranger becomes more in tune with his environment, developing a sixth sense for danger. The ranger can sense if something is wrong, but may not be able to pinpoint the exact nature of the danger. An errant smell, an overturned leaf, or an unnatural quiet all might alert experienced rangers to danger, making it increasingly difficult to surprise them. They receive a +2 to their wisdom check when making a surprise check. This ability increases by one point for every two levels thereafter (+3 at **17th level**, +4 at **19th level**, and so on).

STRENGTH BONUS: At **15th level**, the ranger's long journeys of hardship in the wilderness and exposure to the elements increase his strength by 1 point.

ADVANCED TRACKING: At **17th level**, a ranger's tracking skills surpass even those of many animals. Once rangers find a trail with a successful track check, their knowledge of tracking is such that they can determine accurately the number in the party they are tracking, the make-up of the party (warband, hunting party, etc.), whether they are well or lightly armed, their speed, and their habits (what and how often they eat, etc.). Rangers can determine whether tracked beings belong to one of the following categories: beast, fey, giant, humanoid, plant, vermin, or other (aberration, construct, dragon, elemental, magical beast, ooze, outsider, shapechanger, or undead).

Example: With a successful track check, Borien, the 18th-level ranger, determines he is pursuing 11 foes; four ride on unshod light ponies, and seven travel on foot; one of the ponies is lame, lagging behind the others. Those on foot wear light armor, and two carry pole-arms. The group rests infrequently, and they cover vast distances in short spells of time. They are eating lightly, and they stop to water whenever they have the chance.

Furthermore, the ranger can anticipate the movement of those he tracks. Most animals and humans are predictable in their habits, and recognition of those habituations enables the ranger to figure out where foes may be heading or what they are planning. The ranger has a chance of predicting his foes' preferred direction of travel from point "A" to point "B." In this case, if the ranger has successfully tracked, he must make a second successful track check (+1 only and +1 per level thereafter) to determine the enemies' correct path. Furthermore, the ranger, knowing his foes' habits, can even predict their eventual destination. The destination has to be knowable to the ranger, meaning he must know the area and its possible destinations points based upon the method, direction, and speed of the party's travel. A successful wisdom check (normal) after the above indicates the ranger has surmised his foes' chosen destination.

Note: The Castle Keeper might desire to make this check behind the screen so the player does not know if his character successfully deduced the travelers' destination.

Example: The ranger Rutifix has chosen lycanthropes as his favored enemy. Rutifix has been fighting them for some time and knows their habits really well. When he picks up the tracks of one in a rural agricultural community, he tries to guess the direction the lycanthrope travels. He successfully guesses the direction. The ranger knows three thorps, each with their own distinctive flavor, lie in that direction. The lycanthrope, being hungry, headed to one of the villages. With a successful wisdom check, the ranger picks the correct village—but Rutifix will not know he was successful until he arrives to find the lycanthrope.

TRACKING

Following one's opponent into the wilderness, through a dungeon, or even through the tangled streets of a dirty town is one of the constants in **Castles & Crusades**. The ranger is a past master at it, but others may attempt it from time to time, not fully

understanding that tracking is a skill that takes years to learn and real experience to perfect. We've all heard the ranger shout "don't trample the area until I track," but tracking goes far beyond keeping the trail pure. It is not simply looking in the dirt to see if the tracks of some beast blaze the trail in one direction or the other. Rather, it is a science that involves gathering and interpreting mountains of information.

The skilled tracker knows when to track, and this goes beyond knowing that it is easiest to track in the light snow or after a rain. They also know that tracking in the early morning dew yields the best results as an animal's spoor is more noticeable then than in the late afternoon. Experience teaches them about the terrain and tells them how the terrain looks before ever a creature crosses it. Does the bark on the tree flake naturally, or do the flakes of bark on the ground denote that a beast of a certain height passed recently? They learn, as well, about the spoors of hosts of beasts, how many toes they have, if they are clawed or not, how long their stride is, if they move fast or slow. They know that most creatures, when wounded, travel downhill, rarely going uphill.

Bringing tracking into the game can be fun and challenging. The more detail that the CK places in the actual encounter, or through the use of the character's skill, the more realistic and gripping it can become. Below are items of detail that the CK may want to use when describing the trail the ranger follows. Furthermore, a more detailed understanding of what the challenge level of any particular situation is can often be very helpful.

Take note that too much detail, and laboring over it for too long, may bring the focus of the game away from hunting and into a more esoteric discussion of tracking; keeping the actual text and descriptions brief is the best way.

THE TRACKING STICK: Many skilled rangers carry tracking sticks, small measuring devices with marks on them so they can determine the stride of an animal. This helps them when they lose a trail, as they can determine from the creature's stride, where the next track most likely landed and guides them where to look. Any ranger using a tracking stick gains a +1 on their ability check for the first track check after losing a trail.

To determine the success of a tracking check, the ranger makes a normal track check; however, the following circumstances influence the outcome.

Any non-ranger making a tracking check suffers an automatic -10 penalty to any dice role.

Items of Note

Rangers look for particular signs when tracking. These range from scattered water, to scat, and even to the reflection of grass in the afternoon sun. Below is a sampling of tracking signs that rangers may find and would definitely take note of.

Large Sign

Large sign represents easily noticed marks or signs of passage; where creatures usually walk or hunt, feed or drink.

Trails: Areas that see high traffic for one type of creature, usually going to feeding area or water.

Runs: A normal area of traffic, usually to a favorite feeding ground or water.

Pushdowns: An area of brush that is broken and crushed, usually going off trail and represents where a creature fled.

Eat-Through: Where a creature begins eating at the beginning of an area, such as a berry patch, and eats straight through the patch, moving on afterward.

Bed/Den: An area in thick brush that shows signs of frequent or constant use.

Medium Sign

These are less noticeable signs of passage such as a damaged tree, hair, claw marks, chewing and similar instances. These signs are where a greater understanding of tracking and what to look for mark the ranger as the true tracker.

Rubbing: These marks are small signs left on the sides of trees and rocks that denote where a creature passed and rubbed off the normal bark, dust, or film left on the item in question.

Chewing: The way an animal chews at a tree or in the dirt marks what it is doing and what it is. A clean cut in the bark notes incisors, usually a rodent. Serrated edges are animals that pull on the grass or leaves, breaking them apart rather than cutting them. No particular order in the bite marks denotes a predator chewing up something for minerals within or marking its territory. A clean break denotes plant life that has been broken not chewed at all.

Breaking: This marks where an animal has passed, breaking small limbs, grass blades, knocking of bark, or any similar disturbance of the trail.

Small Sign

Small sign denotes tiny depressions in the earth, or disturbed dust. These signs are only noticeable by a skilled ranger.

Dust: A fine layer of dust settled on plant or rock that has been disturbed may give a ranger a sign even though no track exists. The dust settles once it is disturbed in the original creature's passing. The dust is not in the track itself, and the ranger determines where the track is by where the dust is not.

Scat

Almost all creatures leave signs of their passing in their scat. By breaking the scat apart and conducting a careful examination, the ranger may determine the time it was dropped, the food

they last ate, and how much they ate. Every creature leaves different types of scat. In determining the type of scat a monster may leave, reference the below notations and place the monster in the family you feel it best fits in.

Tube: Scat in a long tube shape denotes any canine or similar creature, also raccoons, skunks, opossum, wolverines, and bears.

Teardrop and Tapered: This scat belongs to any creature in the cat family. The manticore would most likely have this type of scat.

Tapered Tube: This scat belongs to anything in the fox family. A good sample of this type of scat might be the lamia.

Fattened Threads: These thin bits represent weasels, wolverines, and similar creatures. Dragons would most likely have this type of scat.

Pellets, Round: Rabbits and hares drop round pellets when passing. It is very frequent as well. A xorn would perhaps leave such pellets behind.

Pellets, Oblong: These generally represent deer or similar hooved beasts. The pellets may have a nipple on the end. A satyr might leave oblong pellets behind.

Pencil Lead: Small pellets about the size of a pencil lead belong to rats, mice and similar rodents. The stirge might leave these behind it.

Ghost Signs

These consist of faint, telltale signs left in the grass, on leaves, or similar places. When creatures pass they disturb the normal terrain, a terrain that changes throughout the day.

Dulling: This consists of disturbed morning dew. Anything crossing through the dew wipes it from the trail or at least scatters it.

Shining: In the afternoon, grass is dry, stands generally straight and, in this posture, reflects the sunlight. Areas where there is no shine mark out where grass has been depressed. This depressed grass only lasts a few hours. Rangers may note the lack of reflection from several dozen feet away.

Leaf Sign: Weight on a leaf presses it into the ground, leaving a clear mark in the earth. The leaf itself may bounce back but usually remains somewhat depressed. Looking from the side, along a trail, the skilled ranger may discern this sign.

Tracking Tables

When attempting to determine the CL of any track check, the CK may wish to assign an arbitrary number, or they may wish to assign a more detailed value. If the latter is the case, refer to the following Tables. It will be necessary to pre-determine the information, such as time of day the creature passed, before the roll is made.

TABLE 1.22A TERRAIN*

TERRAIN	CL
Depressions	2
Desert	2
Forest, Deciduous	0
Forest, northern or southern	0
Lowlands	1
Mountains & Hills	4
Rivers and Their Courses	3
Wetlands	4

*If the ranger is experienced in any particular type of terrain, the CL is automatically 0.

TABLE 1.22B TIME TRACK CHECK IS MADE

TIME	CL
Morning	-1
Mid-Morning	0
Noon	1
Mid Afternoon	-1
Afternoon	0
Dusk	2
Night	9

TABLE 1.22C TIME ELAPSED

TIME	CL
6hrs	-2
12hrs	0
18hrs	2
24hrs+	4

TABLE 1.22D WEIGHT OF CREATURE

SIZE/WEIGHT*	CL
Tiny	7
Small	3
Medium	0
Large	3
Gargantuan	-5

*C&C does not have sizes for tiny or gargantuan; however, for very small creatures, such as a rat, or very large creatures, such as a dragon, use these sizes.

TABLE 1.22E NUMBER ENCOUNTERED

NO. ENCOUNTERED	CL
1	4
2-4	2
5-13	1
13+	0

TABLE 1.22F WEATHER CONDITIONS

WEATHER	CL
Dry	0
Raining	-1
Snowing	-3

TABLE 1.22G GROUND CONDITIONS*

CONDITIONS	CL
Clay	4
Dry	0
Muddy	-2
Pushdown	1
Run	1
Snow	-5**
Trail	0

*These conditions can be cumulative.

** If it is snowing and there is snow on the ground, the two are not cumulative; they both together count for a -5.

TABLE 1.23 RANGER CLASS INFORMATION

Level	HD	BtH	EPP
13	+4	+11	1,175,001
14	+4	+12	1,400,001
15	+4	+12	1,625,001
16	+4	+13	1,850,001
17	+4	+13	2,075,001
18	+4	+14	2,300,001
19	+4	+14	2,525,001
20	+2	+15	2,750,001
21	+2	+15	2,975,001
22	+2	+16	3,200,001
23	+2	+16	3,425,001
24	+2	+17	3,650,001

ROGUE

Rogues hone their skills as they advance in levels. Years of exploring secret places, moving through the shadows, learning to watch and listen, and hiding and striking their enemy when they least expect it begin to refine their skills. They do not master many new combat skills as they progress, but they come to perfect what they learned as striplings.

Note: Unless otherwise noted, armor affects the rogue's abilities.

ABILITIES

SNEAK ATTACK: The rogue's to-hit and damage bonuses for the sneak attack increase as the rogue gains levels. At **13th level**, the attack is made at +3/+6; at **18th level**, it is made at +4/+9, and at **23rd level**, it's +5/+14. The effective range remains unchanged.

BACK ATTACK: Rogues' to-hit and damage bonuses on their back attack ability increase as they gain levels. At **14th level**, the rogue gains a +6 to hit and inflicts quintuple damage. At **20th level**, the rogue gains a +7 to hit and inflicts sextuple damage.

DETECT SECRET AND CONCEALED DOORS: At **15th level**, a rogue can notice secret and concealed doors similar to an elf by just walking past them. The rogue must be within 10 feet of a concealed door or within 5 feet of a secret door to make the check. The rogue does not have to be actively looking for such doors, but is merely allowed a spot check. A successful wisdom check means the rogue discovers the door. If the rogue is actively searching for the secret or concealed passage, he adds +2 to the check.

HIDE AND MOVE SILENTLY: At **17th level**, the rogue's abilities to hide and to move silently increase. Beginning at **17th level**, a rogue can move or hide up to one-half the character's normal speed at no penalty. At more than one-half and up to the character's full speed, the rogue suffers a -4 penalty. This penalty is reduced to -3 at **19th level** and to -2 at **21st level**; it reduces to -1 at **22nd level**, and there is no penalty at **24th level**.

DEXTERITY BONUS: At **15th level**, the rogue's skills have long become habits, improving his speed and reflexes and increasing his dexterity by 1 point.

SIXTH SENSE: At **14th level**, the rogue has become much more in tune with his environment, developing a sixth sense for danger. They can sense if something is wrong, but may not be able to pinpoint the exact nature of the danger. An errant smell, a shadow, or an unnatural quiet all might alert experienced rogues to danger, making it increasingly difficult to surprise them. They receive a +1 to their wisdom check when making a surprise check. This ability increases by 1 point for every 4 levels thereafter (+2 at **18th level**, +3 at **22nd level**, etc.).

QUICK REACTION: At **18th level**, rogues add +1 to their initiative roll. At **24th level**, this bonus increases to +2. After **24th level**, should the result be an 11 or higher, rogues can take one more action at the end of the round, such as attacking or moving half their movement allowance. They can only take a ranged attack if they have the ranged weapon in hand. Regular actions, such as rummaging through a backpack, generally require too much time, so rogues cannot perform them with the second action. CKs may rule on individual actions. For example, grabbing a pinch of powder from a belt pouch is within reason. Stopping to open a chest and look through its contents is not.

EVASIVE MANEUVER: At **20th level**, the rogues' heightened combat senses allow them to make evasive maneuvers in combat. They are quicker, able to anticipate blows and offensive maneuvers with such skill that they gain a +4 to their AC. This ability does not impair their ability to attack, and it stacks with their normal armor class. The rogue must be actively using this ability and cannot use it while using ranged attack weapons or any rogue ability, such as picking pockets, climbing walls, etc. They cannot use evasive maneuver if surprised.

TABLE 1.24 ROGUE CLASS INFORMATION

Level	HD	BtH	EPP
13	+2	+4	575,001
14	+2	+4	700,001
15	+2	+5	825,001
16	+2	+5	950,001
17	+2	+5	1,075,001
18	+2	+5	1,200,001
19	+2	+6	1,325,001
20	+1	+6	1,450,001
21	+1	+6	1,575,001
22	+1	+6	1,700,001
23	+1	+7	1,825,001
24	+1	+7	1,950,001

WIZARD

Magi are arguably the most powerful of the epic adventurers. Their sorcery delivers extreme punishment. It opens gates to other realms, and it tampers with the fabric of time. Wizards can command the very world around them. Very powerful wizards are few in number, but those who exist are truly forces of nature in and of themselves.

ABILITIES

DETECT MAGIC: Starting at **13th level**, the wizard's long career allows him to detect the telltale signs of magic without casting a spell. After five rounds of study and concentration, he can see the essence of an item, determining whether or not it is magical. With a successful intelligence check, the wizard can ascertain the magic's origins, whether made by dwarves, elves, ancient civilizations, etc. This aspect of the ability presupposes the wizard has encountered this type of magic before. An item crafted by the ancient Ethrum will not reveal itself to a wizard even if he makes a successful intelligence check if the wizard has not previously encountered magic from the ancient Kingdom of Ethrum. At **18th level**, the wizard can determine the power of the item, whether great or small, as well as its nature insofar as its importance to a people, history, cult, or similar entity.

This ability does not act as the spell, and it does not have an area of effect; the wizard must concentrate on the item, be it door, sword, or stone.

INTELLIGENCE BONUS: At **15th level** the wizard's mastery of his craft and the ever-growing complexity of his spells increase his intelligence by 1 point.

COUNTERSPELL: Sorcery is a practiced craft in which the wizard channels magic through the use of willpower, components, gestures, and language. Long turns of experience ingrain wizards with an intimate knowledge of almost any spell, allowing them to readily determine the exact spell others are casting. At **17th level**, the wizard, using this knowledge, can attempt to counter an opponent's casting. A wizard can attempt to counter any spell cast at him by another wizard or illusionist which the wizard can correctly identify. To use this ability, the wizard must make a successful intelligence check at a CL equal to the level of the spell's caster to determine whether the wizard recognizes the spell. If successful, the wizard can possibly cast a counterspell. The player determines the best spell to stop or mitigate the effects of the spell cast at his wizard character. To successfully cast the counterspell, the wizard must win initiative that round or come close enough to allow the casting of a quicker spell. The CK determines the final impact of the counterspell, whether it counteracts the opponent's cast spell or not.

Note: This ability can add a great deal of excitement to the game; however, in order to avoid tremendous frustration, the Castle Keeper should give the player a few minutes to determine the best spell to foil the opponent's casting. It is not reasonable for the CK to assume the player has an in-depth knowledge of all the spells in his character's arsenal.

PERFECT RECALL: At **20th level**, the wizard can recall any previously cast 0-level wizard spells at will. Recalled spells allow the wizard to cast spells beyond his regular allotment. To recall a spell, wizards must make a successful intelligence check at CL0 to recall and cast the spell, and they can only recall a specific spell once that day. For instance, a wizard who successfully recalls a *detect poison* spell he cast earlier may only recall it for one additional casting that day. At **24th level**, the wizard can recall previously cast **1st level** spells at will. The wizard must make a successful intelligence check as with 0- level spells.

TABLE 1.25 WIZARD CLASS INFORMATION

Level	HD	BtH	EPP
13	+1	+3	1,250,001
14	+1	+4	1,500,001
15	+1	+4	1,750,001
16	+1	+4	2,000,001
17	+1	+4	2,250,001
18	+1	+4	2,500,001
19	+1	+4	2,750,001
20	+1	+4	3,000,001
21	+1	+4	3,250,001
22	+1	+5	3,500,001
23	+1	+5	3,750,001
24	+1	+5	4,000,001

TABLE 1.26 SPELL CONTINUATION

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
21	7	7	6	6	5	5	4	4	3
22	7	7	6	6	5	5	4	4	3
23	8	7	7	6	6	5	5	4	4
24	8	7	7	6	6	5	5	4	4

CHARACTER RACES

Racial traits and characteristics play an important role the **Castles & Crusades**. Though the **Players Handbook** discusses the particulars of the seven main races in **C&C**, there are many more factors the Castle Keepers and players may wish to consider and even include in creating both characters and NPCs. Also, racial variants, such as different types of dwarves or halflings, often play a role in the game.

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

A player may choose his character's height and weight based upon the chart below. The base ranges below for both men and women are simply guidelines for the average height and weight for a character of that race.

TABLE 1.27 HEIGHT AND WEIGHT BY RACE

Race	Height	Weight
Dwarf	3' 10" to 5' 2"	140-180
Elf, High	4' 0" to 6' 0"	100-135 lbs.
Elf, Twilight (drow)	4' 0" to 5' 6"	90-115 lbs.
Elf, Wild	4' 4" to 5' 8"	100-125 lbs.
Elf, Wood (gray)	4' 8" to 6' 6"	110-165 lbs.
Gnome	3' 6" to 4' 8"	70-90 lbs.
Half-elf	4' 2" to 6' 2"	90-175 lbs.
Half-orc	4' 10" to 6' 5"	120-180 lbs.
Halfling	3' 0" to 4' 6"	45-70 lbs.
Human	4' 8" to 6' 8"	100-200 lbs.

AGE

A character's minimum starting age is indicated on the chart below. A player may always elect a starting age higher than the mandatory minimum.

TABLE 1.28 MINIMUM STARTING AGE

Race	Adulthood	A/B*/C/D/ F/R	Pal/ Ran	Bard/I/ Mon/Wiz
Dwarf	150	+4d6	+7d6	+10d6
Elf, High	200	+7d6	+9d6	+12d6
Elf, Twilight (Drow)	100	+4d6	+6d6	+8d6
Elf, Wild	40	+3d6	+5d6	+8d6
Elf, Wood (Gray)	60	+4d6	+6d6	+8d6
Gnome	30	+3d6	+4d6	+6d6
Half-Elf	20	+1d6	+2d6	+3d6
Half-Orc	13	+1d4	+1d6	+2d6
Halfling	16	+1d4	+1d6	+2d6
Human	15	+1d4	+1d6	+2d6

*Assassin, barbarian, cleric, druid, fighter, rogue

TABLE 1.29 AGING

Race	Middle Age	Old	Venerable	Maximum
Dwarf	300	450	600	+2d100 years
Elf, High	500	750	1000	+3d100 years
Elf, Twilight (Drow)	200	300	400	+2d100 years
Elf, Wild	100	150	200	+1d100 years
Elf, Wood (Gray)	150	225	300	+1d100 years
Gnome	75	112	150	+3d20 years
Half-Elf	62	93	125	+3d20 years
Half-Orc	30	45	60	+1d10 years
Halfling	40	60	80	+2d20 years
Human	35	53	70	+2d20 years

EFFECTS OF AGING

Everyone ages, and as they do, their worldly knowledge and wisdom often increase, but their strength and constitution wane. Below is a brief table listing the cumulative effects of aging.

TABLE 1.30 EFFECTS OF AGING

Middle Age:	-1 strength, constitution, dexterity;	+1 intelligence, wisdom, charisma
Old Age:	-2 strength, constitution, dexterity;	+1 intelligence, wisdom, charisma
Venerable:	-3 strength, constitution, dexterity;	-1 intelligence, wisdom, charisma

RACE AND LANGUAGES

All beginning characters speak the common tongue, called Vulgate or Common. A character also begins play knowing how to speak additional languages depending upon the character's race. The descriptions of each race detail a character's starting languages. The character's intelligence determines how many more languages he can learn. Characters with an intelligence of 13-15 can learn one additional language; characters with an intelligence of 16-17 can learn two additional languages; characters with an intelligence of 18-19 can learn three additional languages; characters with an intelligence of 20+ can learn four additional languages.

Learning new languages takes time. The amount of time depends on how much effort the character spends on the task. Immersion can communicate rapid results, whereas traveling with someone and occasionally speaking the language takes much longer. The character's intelligence plays a huge role in the time required to learn a language, as well.

To determine the required time, the Castle Keeper must assign a challenge level to the language. This challenge level establishes

the time its takes to learn the language and the target number of the intelligence check the character must achieve to master it. Establishing the CL of any given language can be very difficult. Many influences affect a language's development and complexity: the language's root source, the environment and culture it developed in, its history, and its proximity to other language groups all play a part in a language's development. Learning a language can be easy or difficult depending upon these manifold influences.

Anyone who attempts to learn a language is allowed an intelligence check at the end of the time period allotted by the CK. If successful, they gain a partial understanding of the language; after a year of speaking the language regularly (CK decides the needed regularity based on language's complexity and surrounding society), they can speak it fluently. Any failed check means they have a limited understanding of the language and gain a +2 to their next attempt to master the language, and they only require half the time to learn it.

Example: In the world of Aihrde, all human tongues originate from Dwarven, so a human would have an easy time learning it, while it would be difficult for an elf to learn Dwarven. The human will find familiar words and grammatical structures, whereas the elf will not find any common reference points.

The Castle Keeper must determine the relative difficulty of learning the new language. This can be done by determining the language's proximity to the learner's own base tongue. If you feel that the language is close to the learner's language, then learning the new tongue will be easier for the character. If the new language is completely foreign, then the language is complex or extremely difficult for the character to learn.

Table 1.31 Learning Languages ascribes a challenge level to learning a new language. The language's proximity refers to how close the language is to the learner's native tongue. The challenge level is what the learner must overcome to achieve learning the language during the chart's prescribed time. The learner must successfully achieve "limited" before he can learn "partial," and so on. The chart assumes active study at least 2 hours a day.

Limited: The learner knows enough to get by with simple expressions in an area where the language is predominate. Knowledge includes traditional greetings and common reference points, such as the words for foods, types of shelters, travelling directions, etc.

Partial: The learner can speak the language using complex sentences, but is not able to share in complex commentary. For instance, discussions on military tactics, philosophical discourse, scientific theories, the nature of magic, and so on would not be possible with the character's language skill level.

Fluent: The character can speak and understand the language in all its varied complexity.

TABLE 1.31 LEARNING LANGUAGES

Language Proximity	CL	Fluent	Partial	Limited
Root-Derived	4	6 months	3 months	1 month
Root-Familiar	6	12 months	6 months	2 months
Foreign	10	24 months	12 months	4 months
Alien	12	60 months	30 months	10 months

Root-Derived: These languages share the same root language, possess similar cultural norms, and share many environmental reference points with the native tongue's vocabulary and grammar.

Root-Familiar: A root-familiar language shares some of the same source words, but is different enough from the learner's native tongue that it has many foreign elements to master.

Foreign: Languages that are foreign share no common traits, but they do have the same cultural background and are more readily accessible to the learner through common idiomatic references.

Alien: The learner possesses no cultural, historical, linguistic, or philosophical reference points to the new language. Without these common references, learning the alien language will be extremely difficult for the learner.

IMMERSION

If the learner immerses himself in the language, this means he cannot communicate in his own language and has no other outlet for communication than speaking the new language. This total immersion reduces the time limits on **Table 1.31** by three-fourths. The language's challenge level does not change due to the immersion.

LITERACY

Characters cannot necessarily read and write the languages they speak. Writing and reading are not common skills for people in pre-industrial societies. For most adventurers, the need to read or write is very small, and the opportunity to learn such skills is uncommon. The Castle Keeper should first determine whether or not the character can learn such skills, if their background precludes literacy, then such skills are impossible to achieve at beginning play. The player, too, must decide if he wants his character to be literate. Many players may find that literacy does not fit their image of their character, so they choose to forgo having such skills. If the situation warrants it and the player deems it fits the character, an intelligence check determines literacy in the desired language. Of course, the CK can always make a determination on a character's literacy based on the character's background.

Characters can always choose to be literate in their primary language, whether Vulgate, Elven, Dwarven, etc. They are not necessarily literate in the other languages they speak. They must make an intelligence check to determine literacy for each known language.

Characters must be able to partially speak a language before they may attempt to learn to read and write in that language. If they have learned to partially speak a language, they are entitled to an intelligence check, the challenge level being equal to the CL listed on **Table 1.31**. Success means the character can read and write simple structures in the language.

For more complex structures, the character must make a successful intelligence check against a challenge level equal to those listed on **Table 1.31** However, an additional +2 modifier is applied.

EXPANDING CHARACTER RACES

The **Castles & Crusades Players Handbook** details seven different character races available to players: dwarf, elf, gnome, halfling, half-elf, half-orc, and human. These seven races represent the archetypes of racial creatures. We find them in most branches of fantasy literature, from comics, to movies, to novels, to video games. As a game of archetypes, **C&C** does not readily provide any information about other races, whether variants of the seven or altogether new races. However, players, particularly experienced players, often desire to expand their own horizons, branching out of the normal racial barriers. This character expansion may be something as simple as a variant race, such as wanting to play an aquatic elf, for instance. Or it may be something far more complex to integrate, such as a bugbear. Whatever the case, the Castle Keeper must carefully weigh the addition of new races or racial variants.

Three types of racial additions exist: racial variants, monster races, and new races. These bring a whole new level of complexity to the game.

Racial Variants: These are new races built upon the foundations of already existing races. In the world of Aihrde, the wild elf classifies as a racial variant. These elves possess many of the traits of the high elf, with some lessened powers common to all elves, which offsets their racially unique powers.

Monster Races: These are monsters converted to the class system.

New Races: New races consist of completely new racial constructs.

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Adding any new rules, monsters, classes, or even races requires adjustments to the game's balance. Mechanically, **C&C** has an internal game balance, where the monsters roughly equate to character levels, allowing monsters to challenge the ever-advancing character. The SIEGE Engine balances the character's levels, hit points, abilities, and attributes with other characters as well as with a monster's HD, AC, and abilities. Merging the two may cause complications, and the CK must take this into account before integrating any new monster race as a player race. Allowing a monster race to gain class levels on top of its natural abilities may set that race heads above the other races. On the surface, this may sound okay, but it creates a problem in running the game, as encounters that were challenging for the entire party may no longer be challenging to the new player race. Conversely, if they are challenging for the new player race, they may prove too deadly to the other party members.

Example: Allowing a player to play a hill giant ranger combines skills, such as favored enemy, with an already tremendous ability to deal massive damage. At **5th level**, the hill giant ranger rolls 2d8 damage for his weapon, and when the situation calls for it, adds a Combat Marauder bonus of +5. After tossing in his strength bonus of +3, the hill giant ranger does an average of 16 points per swing, which is significantly higher than rangers of normal character races.

Monsters occupy a vital place in any **C&C** game, and turning them into player characters runs the risk of unmasking a host of challenges the CK may not want to unleash. In order for a player to play a monster as a character, he must know the monster's abilities and limitations. Enterprising CKs change those abilities constantly during the course of the game to either make the game more challenging or to lighten the danger. CKs should caution any player that the monster or variant race he creates is not subject to the rules detailed in the **Monsters & Treasure** book; instead, the character is subject to the rules and guidelines governing the character's class (as the CK determines they are applicable).

For their own games, CKs should make certain the desired player monster race actually exists in their game's setting and that allowing players to play a member of said race does not unbalance the adventure or setting or work against any cultural or historical themes inherent to their game.

Second only to game balance is consideration of the other players at the gaming table. Allowing one to player to play an outlandish monster or strange racial variant may be off-putting to the other players, making it harder for them to play their own archetypical races. This problem becomes particularly poignant when the character in question gains certain abilities, such as Twilight Vision, extra damage, or special magical abilities that make them more powerful than the other players' characters. These character imbalances often severely impact the flow of play, as some players will react negatively to what they view as the CK showing favoritism to a particular player.

Be very cautious in allowing players to play other races or racial variants. Allowing them to do so can also open the Pandora's box of monster characters, culminating in strange half-dragon creatures that have little place in any fantasy milieu; such characters ruin the archetypes and engross players with super-powering their characters rather than experiencing adventures and building a story. Dragons are dragons, and they should remains so. Dwarves are dwarves, and they should remain so.

If racial variants must enter the game, severely limit their racial abilities, much as dwarves in **Monsters & Treasure** differ from dwarves in the **Players Handbook**. Any monsters making the leap to player-character races should suffer the same limitations.

THE MECHANICS OF NEW RACES

Looking at the standard races in **Monsters & Treasure** and comparing them to the comparable races in the **PHB** reveals subtle differences. For instance, the **M&T** dwarf possesses three primes (they have a P for their Primes, which represents all the physical attributes); the character dwarf in the **PHB**, on the other hand, possesses only two primes. How is it that dwarves, arguably the same creatures, possess different rules sets one from the other? The answer is simple.

In **Castles & Crusades**, monsters are monsters, and characters are characters. Different rules apply to each. In this case, the dwarves in **M&T** represent the normal, everyday dwarves one might encounter. Though on the surface, the **M&T** dwarf possesses three primes and seems more powerful, he is, in fact, much weaker, for his hit dice remain permanently locked at one. The character dwarf, on the other hand, is not the average, run-of-the-mill dwarf. Instead, he is the best of the best, a bold, brave, adventurous soul who plows through the maelstrom of the underworld with his axe, all the while singing songs of the world's ending. He is a hero, and different rules apply.

When the decision to allow a new race or new racial variant enters the game, it is important to note that the rules for the race in **Monsters & Treasure** no longer apply. The race enters the realm of the **PHB**, and assumes the rules governing his class. This makes the entire integration process very easy. A bugbear ranger is now simply a ranger who may be allowed a few racial attributes (CK's choice). Doing this allows the CK to avoid creating a new race.

Role-playing the new race or racial variant is the easiest approach, but several factors must be considered when doing so. The following sections touch on the most important, establishing simple, thematic guidelines concerning game balance.

Primes: Whether creating new races or variants, the number of assigned primes is critically important. The primes determine the relative ability of a race to save against any number of events or attacks. Assigning more than three primes makes creatures extremely powerful. Generally, only high-level monsters have six primes; allowing any playable class six primes is unbalancing. Humans maintain an equal balance with other races due to their three primary attributes; assigning non-human races three primes is also unbalancing. The general rule of thumb is that non-human races or racial variants should not have more than two primes.

Hit Dice: Monsters possess an established number of hit dice that does not advance as the monster adventures or grows older. Discard these hit dice entirely and instead use the chosen class' established hit dice. A bugbear with 3d8 HD becomes a 1st-level fighter with 1d10 hit points. Even very large creatures should lose their natural hit dice, exchanging it for the class' hit dice.

Armor Class: Many monsters have a higher AC, even if they do not wear armor. This armor class does not carry over to the character monster, though at the CK's discretion a bonus may apply. A character monster may attempt to regain some of this lost AC by having a high dexterity and wearing good armor.

Special Weapons: Many monsters use special weapons, and CKs may consider allowing the new race to use them. Any such weapons cannot conflict with the class' own weapons or armor limitations. When allowing special weapons, address the game's balance, making certain the new weapon doesn't overpower the racial character.

Special Abilities: Many races possess special abilities, such as shapechange, spell resistance, spell-like-abilities, etc. These abilities do not merge with existing class abilities well, nor do they normally allow for any kind of game balance. The best way to handle these is to slow the character's level advancement. For each special ability, the CK should add 1000 experience points to the character's level progression chart and double the amount for each successive level; at **2nd level** add 1000, at **3rd level** 2000, and at **4th level** 4000, and so on.

ROLE-PLAYING THROUGH

Before embarking on the onerous task of creating a new race, consider conferring with the player to find a way of using existing examples. By consulting with the player, the Castle Keeper can pinpoint why the player wants to play something different and gain an understanding of what the player views as his character's desires. For abilities coming naturally to a monster-turned-player-character race, simply exchange them for class abilities. By working with the player, retaining game balance becomes easier and a new and exciting race, monster race, or racial variant enters the game's fray.

Example: Mark has decided he wants to play an aquatic elf monk in the ongoing campaign. His choice reflects the game's setting, which seems to be concentrated around Darkenfold's many rivers and lakes. Mark's main desire is to gain a character with superior swimming skills and the ability to hold his breath for extended periods (or even breathe water). If granted, these abilities expand the game's entire playing field. Knowing this, the Castle Keeper readily agrees to this if Mark sacrifices the monk's fast movement ability while on land. Mark agrees and notes the changes on his character sheet. With little effort and no unbalancing effects, a new race enters the game. Mark is happy with a new character, and the CK can not only utilize whole regions of woodlands in the setting, but he can now have the adventurers explore both lake and river bottoms, as well.

RACIAL VARIANTS

The development of racial variants is fairly common. **Monsters & Treasure** already allows for several elf variants: drow, gray elf, high elf, wood elf, half-elf, and the wild elf. The elf presented in the **Players Handbook** is the standard high elf. The other elves are racial variants, each with their own unique traits. Playing a variant elf is entirely possible; the foundation for the variant's use as player characters is already in place in **Monsters & Treasure**. As with the elves, one can easily create variant

dwarves, gnomes, and halflings. Variants for goblins, orcs, gnolls, or the like can be created from their monster base and are limited only by the imagination of the player and the CK.

The following are possible variants for a **Castles & Crusades** campaign. They are by no means to be considered official racial variants, but are merely offered as examples of how one might go about creating a racial variant. Official variants are the Castle Keeper's purview.

Example 1: Deep Dwarf

These dwarves live deep underneath the earth and rarely - if ever - come to the surface. They are primarily tunnelers, miners, smiths, masons, and warriors who fight continuous wars and battles against their fellow denizens of the deep.

ANIMOSITY: Deep dwarves have an instinctive, intense hatred for orcs, goblins, and humanoids of the deep. All interactions with humanoids the deep dwarves encounter are nearly impossibly to manage peaceably. All charisma checks between the two groups are at -8, and any dealings, including trade, require a charisma check.

DEEPVISION: Deep dwarves have the Deepvision ability up to 180 feet.

DETERMINE DEPTH AND DIRECTION: Deep dwarves accurately determine their depth and direction 100% of the time unless magic or something else interferes with their ability.

ENMITY: When fighting goblins and orcs or other like-minded denizens of the deep, the deep dwarves gain a +2 to hit and a +1 to damage. Withdrawing from combat against these foes requires a charisma check. The check is normal if the total dwarven HD outnumber or equal that of their opponents. They make the check with a +1 bonus if the humanoids have up to twice the dwarves' hit dice, +2 if up to three times their hit dice, +4 if up to 4 times their HD, and +8 if 5 times, etc.

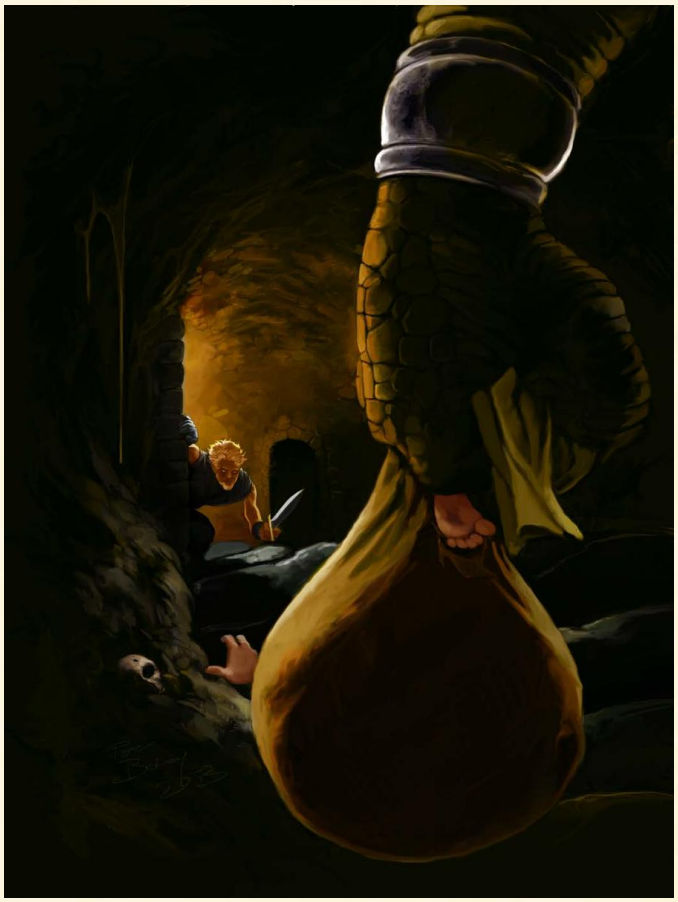
RESISTANCE TO ARCANE MAGIC: Deep dwarves receive a +4 to all saves versus arcane magic.

RESISTANCE TO POISON: As normal.

STONECRAFT: As described in the **Players Handbook** but with a +3 bonus, increasing to +6 if actively searching.

DAYLIGHT FIGHTING: Deep dwarves have spent little or no time above ground. In full daylight (not lamplight or torchlight), deep dwarves suffer a -2 penalty to to-hit rolls and all constitution saving throws.

WEAPON LIMITATION: Deep dwarves never use two-handed weapons or pole-arms; if they do so, they suffer a -4 penalty to use. All bows except crossbows are likewise at a -4 penalty. Essentially, they can use only medium and small weapons in battle.



LANGUAGES: Dwarven, Goblin, and Orc, plus one other.

SIZE: Small (they tend to be slightly smaller than standard dwarves)

MOVEMENT: 15 feet

TYPICAL CLASSES: Fighter, Monk, Barbarian, Rogue, Bard, Cleric.

ATTRIBUTE MODIFIER: +1 Strength, +1 Constitution, -1 Dexterity, -2 Charisma.

MONK MODIFIER: Monk deep dwarves receive a +1 bonus to their natural AC.

Notes on Deep Dwarves

Deep dwarves have essentially the same abilities as standard dwarves, though they are altered slightly for their terrain type. However, the defensive expertise ability has been traded for a bonus when attacking certain humanoids, creating a slightly different racial variant.

Example 2: Longleaf Halflings

These halflings are wilder than most of their brethren. They tend to live near wilderness areas or hide in small enclaves deep in the wilds. A sturdy group of halflings, they pride themselves on their wilderness skills. Longleaf halflings tend to avoid encounters with the outside world as much as possible, and they rely primarily on their hiding abilities to survive rather

than their fighting abilities. They tend to be slightly larger than the average halfling.

FEARLESS: Because longleaf halflings are in near-constant danger, they have learned that fear is sometimes a worthy trait as a survival mechanism. Controlling or even harnessing it has its advantages. This balance equates to an internal resolve. They receive a +1 bonus to all saving throws versus fear and to morale checks.

HIDE: Longleaf halflings spend much of their lives avoiding the prying eyes of others. They receive a +2 to all conceal or hiding checks while outdoors (this bonus does not apply to hiding indoors). If they try to move silently and hide at the same time, they suffer a -2/-5/-10 to their checks. Moving at more than twice their normal speed makes it impossible for longleafs to hide or move silent.

MOVE SILENTLY: The penalties are -5 and -10 at a full charge, but in all other respects are as described in the **Players Handbook**.

DUSKVISION: They possess normal Duskvision.

RESISTANCE: Longleaf halflings are resistant to druidic and nature-based magic, and they receive a +1 bonus to all saving throws when afflicted by such.

ARCANE WEAKNESS: Longleaf halflings are susceptible to arcane magic, having only rarely felt its pinch and having little knowledge of it. They suffer a -2 penalty to all arcane-based magic/spell saving throws.

WILDERNESS LORE: This ability is the same as the druid's Nature Lore ability for the specified area.

SUSCEPTIBLE TO DISEASE: Less contact with the outside world has left these halflings more susceptible to diseases; they suffer a -2 penalty to all saves versus contracting diseases.

SURPRISE: Longleaf halflings gain a +1 to all surprise checks.

LANGUAGES: Halfling, plus one other

SIZE: Small

MOVEMENT: 20 feet

TYPICAL CLASSES AND LIMITATIONS: Druid, Ranger, Rogue, and Bard. Longleaf halflings must have an intelligence of 16 and charisma of 16 to become illusionists or wizards.

ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS: -2 Strength, +1 Dexterity, -1 Constitution

RANGER MODIFIER: Tracking +2

Example 3: Orc

Orcs are a very aggressive and warlike race; they enjoy the fight and lust in the carnage of war. They tend to eschew magic with the exception of their spiritual leaders, whose primary role is as adjunct attacker and enforcer of the cruel lifestyle orcs live. They hold martial prowess in the highest esteem. Orcs are less intelligent than other creatures.

MOVE SILENTLY: All orcs receive a -1 penalty to move silently checks.

HIDE: All orcs receive a -2 penalty to all hide checks.

HORRENDOUS STENCH: Orcs smell. They do not consider bathing and cleaning themselves a trait worthy of their time. As such, anyone can smell an orc's reek a long way off, covered as they are in the debris of their life's work. Orcs suffer a -2 penalty on surprise attempts.

DARKVISION: Orcs have Darkvision and can see 120 feet in pitch blackness.

ENHANCED SMELL: All orcs can smell like a blood hound. They can smell anything (different from their own scents) within 60 yards. This makes it nearly impossible to surprise an orc. For this reason they receive a +2 to all surprise checks when being surprised.

TOUGH HIDE: Orcs have thick hides; their skins are normally three times as thick as a human's or dwarf's skin. Furthermore, it is leathery, consisting of a bark-like quality and affording the orc an automatic +2 bonus to their AC.

RESISTANCE TO DISEASE: A nasty and grimy race, orcs have an ingrown resistance to most diseases, receiving a +4 bonus to all checks versus diseases. They also recover from illness at twice the normal rate.

SUSCEPTIBLE TO FEAR: Orc tribes bear the onus of a herd mentality; they usually follow their leaders into and out of battle. Loss of a leader or being removed from their leader brings out the flight instinct in orcs. They receive a -2 to all fear-based saving throws and morale checks.

LANGUAGES: Orc and Goblin

SIZE: Medium

MOVEMENT: 20 feet

TYPICAL CLASSES: Fighter

ATTRIBUTE MODIFIERS: +2 Strength, -1 Dexterity, +2 Constitution, -3 Intelligence, -3 Wisdom, -4 Charisma

RACIAL INTERACTIONS

In **C&C**, races refer to different species of creatures, from dwarves to orcs, hobgoblins, and humans. It is entirely up to the Castle Keeper as to how these races interact, whether they share similar language patterns, history, culture, religion, or economic structures. In general, **C&C** treats each race as a different monster or player type, and the CK who plays them along these lines finds the game runs much smoother. To complicate their game with racial issues only detracts from the purpose behind the game's inclusion of the various races: to broaden the pool of player options.

Creatures like orcs, goblins, hobgoblins, and gnolls are monsters, and the CK should treat them as such. Worrying about racial divides causes distractions in even the best of circumstances. Evil greater than any racial antipathy drives these creatures.

Player races are marginally different, as character races interact more with each other and other NPCs on a non-violent level. When these races do interact, they can be influenced or the game impacted by diplomacy, trade, or other types of communications. When doing so, it is up to the Castle Keeper to determine what, if any, racial antipathy or sympathy exists between them. The following charts offer a guide for both the standard racial antipathies/sympathies that might exist and the effects such emotions have on the relevant charisma checks.

TABLE 1.32 STANDARD RACIAL INTERACTIONS reflects the manner in which each of the seven standard races views the other. The scale is set on a numerical scale of 1-8; one is the most favorable, while eight is the least favorable. The number before the slash represents the highest possible rank the viewer sees in the other race. The number following the slash is the modifier to any charisma checks made between the parties. The race rolling the check adds or subtracts the modifier.

RANKS

1: **REVERENT**: They view this race in more-than-favorable light. Charisma 19

2: **AFFABLE**: They view this race as friendly and easy to get along with. Charisma 17

3: **FRIENDLY**: They view the race with respect. Charisma 15

4: **RESPECTFUL**: They view the race in very friendly, empathetic terms. Charisma 12

5: **CONSIDERATE**: They view the race sympathetically. Charisma 8

6: **ALOOF**: They have a serious dislike of the race. Charisma 5

7: **ANIMOSITY**: They have a strong hatred for the race. Charisma 3

8: **DISDAIN**: They abhor the race, avoiding it when possible. Charisma 1

TABLE 1.32 STANDARD RACIAL INTERACTIONS

	Dwarf	Elf	Gnome	Halfling	Half-Elf	Half-Orc	Human
Dwarf	1/+3	6/-2	4/0	4/0	5/-1	8/-4	4/0
Elf	6/-2	1/+3	4/0	4/0	5/-1	6/-2	4/0
Gnome	5/-1	2/+2	1/+3	2/+2	2/+2	5/-1	4/0
Halfling	4/0	2/+2	2/+2	1/+3	2/+2	5/-1	2/0
Half-Elf	5/-1	2/+2	2/+2	2/+2	2/+2	4/0	4/0
Half-Orc	5/-1	4/0	4/0	4/0	4/0	4/0	4/0
Human	3/+1	3/+1	2/+2	2/+2	2/+2	3/+1	4/0

CHAPTER 2 – MAGIC

Magic is one of the pillars of **Castles & Crusades**. From spells to items to magical creatures, magic governs the fantasy milieu. Its relative impact, how common it is, lies at the discretion of the Castle Keeper and the game's players. The **Players Handbook** clearly outlines the rules governing the use of magic in **C&C**, from spellcasting to magic item creation. But the **PH** leaves many of the details up to the Castle Keeper. The cost of spell construction, the cost of purchasing spells, the spellcaster's actual starting spells, and the cost of components, are a few of the details left up to the Castle Keeper or player. The following provides several solid guidelines for pricing, spell construction, and use of magic in **Castles & Crusades**. This chapter also presents several alternative approaches to magic in **Castles & Crusades.** These approaches to spellcasting involve more rules mechanics, and at times, more role-playing. Though far more complicated and time-consuming, they are worth a try for those who desire to break the mold of normal play.

COMPONENTS OF THE TRADE

SPELLBOOKS

All **1st level** wizards and illusionists begin play with a spellbook. Their master, instructor, guild, order, or trainer grants them a spellbook upon completion of their studies. This beginning spellbook contains a number of spells equal to the number of spells they can cast at **1st level**. The spellbook is not a normal book; it is magical.

The spellbook possesses an automatic Spell Resistance (SR) of 10, allowing it some protection against magical attacks. A spellbook failing its spell resistance check against magical attacks from spells such as *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, or any other spell causing catastrophic equipment damage suffers massive damage; each spell within the book is subject to another SR check, but at a reduced SR of 5. The attack permanently destroys any spell within the damaged book failing its check.

The magical nature of spellbooks also allows them to withstand a great deal of normal punishment. They do not suffer the normal effects of water damage, wear and tear, or even battle damage. The ink inscribed in the spellbook is magical; it does not run or smear. The pages themselves, laden with magical residue, rarely tear, and when they do, it is almost always on the edges. Spellbooks age very slowly, their pages rarely becoming brittle or dry. Extended exposure to sunlight does not fade their pages. In short, no normal weathering occurs to spellbooks.

Catastrophic damage, such as being swallowed by a black dragon, struck by a magical weapon, tossed in a vat of acid, engulfed in fire, or even being struck by a normal weapon with a massive blow can damage the spellbook, as these are not normal battle wear and tear situations. The Castle Keeper decides when battle damage is extensive enough to incur a check.

When a spellbook must make a save, the CK must note the origin and power of the spellbook. Spellbooks crafted by greater wizards are more powerful than those awarded to young neophyte wizards. When a spellbook must make a save against catastrophic damage, it always saves as a prime, with a challenge base of 12. Consult **Table 2.1 Types of Spellbooks** for

the power of the book and its check bonus. The character must make the save for the spellbook.

TABLE 2.1 TYPES OF SPELLBOOKS

Spellbook Type	Bonus	Spellbook Type	Bonus
Prestidigitator	+3	Warlock	+8
Theurgist	+4	Gramaryian	+9
Thaumaturge	+5	High Mage	+10
Magician	+6	Wizard	+10
Magus	+7	Arch Mage	n/a*

* A book crafted by an arch mage cannot be damaged by anything short of an ancient wyrm's breath weapon.

Writing in Spellbooks

The average spellbook is finite, only holding a limited number of spell levels. Spellbooks are six inches wide by nine inches tall with a two-inch spine depth, each book having 200 pages. The spellbook described in the **Players Handbook** is a traveling spellbook and has sufficient room to allow casters up to **20th level** to store their entire complement of spells they can cast per day. This however may not necessarily be all the spells the caster has access to. The prudent wizard has a spare copy of the traveling spellbook stored in his tower, and may also have additional spellbooks there dedicated to a particular spell type or level.

Spells take one page per level of the spell. Cantrips, or 0 level spells, also require one page per spell. Thus a spellbook dedicated to **1st level** spells could accept 200 spells while a spellbook of **9th level** spells could only accept 22 spells. The Castle Keeper may change this standard as desired, but it's recommended to limit the changes to the wizard's research spellbooks and not the traveling spellbook.

Casting Spells from a Book

At times a wizard or illusionist must resort to casting spells from books. These instances are rare, brought on by extreme danger, where survival outweighs the value of the magical tome. Casting from the spellbook is very similar to casting from a scroll, offering the possibility of damage to both the spell and the book.

Casters do not need any material components when casting from spellbooks; however, they must have focus components, if required. The cast spell is immediately destroyed upon casting, its pages dissolving in the book from the channeled magic. Furthermore, the surrounding pages run the risk of damage or destruction. Each spell listed before and after the cast spell must make a successful physical save (prime), with the CL equal to the level of spell the wizard or illusionist actually cast from the book. The higher level the spell, the greater chance it damages the book. Books crafted from magical materials may gain a bonus to their savings throws (**see Chapter 3: Equipment**). The spellbook's SR does not protect it against spells cast from the book.

STARTING SPELLS

The **Players Handbook** clearly establishes the number of beginning spells for 1st-level spellcasters. Clerics and druids pray daily for their spells, their wisdom dictating their number of starting spells. Wizards and illusionists must roll their spells on the appropriate charts in the **Players Handbook**, or the CK assigns them. Rolling randomly has its advantages, for it challenges the players' skill, forcing them, at times, to use spells they would not normally choose. Assigning spells presents the same challenges.

On the downside, either approach may create an unbalanced character and one less enjoyable to play, as mages may find themselves with a bundle of defensive or informational spells but no offensive spells at all. With low hit points and a low AC, magic users may find themselves outclassed at low levels unless they have a good, solid spell base that mixes a variety of spells.

The following tables **(Table 2.2 - Table 2.5)** allow for a more balanced approach to beginning play, dividing the spells into three different categories: informational, offensive, and defensive spells. Allow players to choose one category from which to roll for their first spell. For their second spell, roll randomly on the chart, disregarding any roll duplicating the chosen category. If the players have characters entitled to a 3rd beginning spell due to high intelligence, roll randomly again. The tables list duplicate spells, allowing the players' characters a better chance to begin play with very useful spells. Reroll any duplicate spells.

TABLE 2.2 STARTING 0 LVL WIZARD SPELLS

	Informational	Offensive	Defensive
1	Arcane Mark	Dancing Lights	Dancing Lights
2	Detect Magic	Ghost Sound	Endure Elements
3	Detect Poison	Light	Ghost Sound
4	Light	Mage Hand	Mending
5	Message	Message	Open/Close
6	Open/Close	Prestidigitation	Prestidigitation

TABLE 2.3 STARTING 1ST LVL WIZARD SPELLS

	Informational	Offensive	Defensive
1	Com. Languages	Burning Hands	Alter Size
2	Erase	Charm Person	Change Self
3	Floating Disk	Jump	Feather Fall
4	Hold Portal	Magic Missile	Hold Portal
5	Identify	Shocking Grasp	Jump
6	Prt. Alignment	Sleep	Prt. Alignment
7	Read Magic	Spider Climb	Shield
8	Sum. Familiar	Unseen Servant	Spider Climb

TABLE 2.4 STARTING 0 LVL ILLUSIONIST SPELLS

	Informational	Offensive	Defensive
1	Arcane Mark	Dancing Lights	Dancing Lights
2	Detect Illusion	Dragon Mark	Dragon Mark
3	First Aid	Influence	First Aid
4	Influence	Light	Ghost Sound
5	Magical Aura	Message	Light
6	Message	Prestidigitation	Mending

TABLE 2.5 STARTING 1ST LVL ILLUSIONIST SPELLS

	Informational	Offensive	Defensive
1	Erase	Charm Person	Change Self
2	Faerie's Glam	Color Spray	Darkness
3	Hypnotism	Darkness	Daze
4	Read Magic	Dragon Image	Dragon Armor
5	See Invisibility	Ill. Hounds	Head Fog
6	Silent Image	M. Dark Chaos	Ill. Hounds
7	Un. Aura	Ventriloquism	Obscuring Mist
8	Ventriloquism	W. Strength	W. Strength

COMPONENTS

The **Players Handbook** lists five types of components: verbal, somatic, material, focus, and divine focus. The **PH** provides adequate explanation for the components, using and acquiring them, pricing them, etc. Of the five types of components, physical components, which include focus and divine focus components, often require more management. The components' availability and quality may affect whether a magic user can cast a spell, and they may even affect the spell's quality.

Purpose of Components

As mentioned above, three types of physical components exist: material, focus, and divine focus. For all practical purposes, these components play only a minor mechanical role in the game. They force the magic user to purchase, or at least actively acquire, items in order to cast spells; components limit the number of times a magic user can cast a spell, which brings them in line with all the other characters whose equipment limits their fighting abilities. A fighter in the desert who loses his sword has no weapon with which to fight, much the same as a magic user who uses his last lump of coal can no longer cast *fireball*. Simply put, requiring the use of components allows a control mechanism for the CK and a balancing mechanism in regards to the other characters.

Role-playing component management and acquisition can be an arduous task, forcing the character to keep up with multiple items for his many spells. This becomes particularly true for high-level characters. However, disregarding the necessity of obtaining components unbalances the game, especially at high levels, for the magic user, who already deals 18d6 points of damage with his *fireball*, then has no limit on how many he may cast. Balanced against a fighter, who on average deals 2d8 points of damage, the wizard becomes monstrously powerful.

Note: This balance does not make for happy spellcasters, but the balance ensures a fun time for *all* the game's players. The CK who plans a large encounter that is instantly destroyed by rapid-fire spellcasting finds himself with a bunch of players bored at their inability to do anything during the encounter and with one magic-casting player who is overly excited by his ability to defeat everything in his path. In short, components provide game balance.

Yet, overplaying this balance is easy very easy to do. Mildly adjudicating component management is the best approach for CKs to take. Forcing a player to keep up with 300 different components, the amounts he possesses, and where he keeps them makes playing the high-level mage absolutely tedious, proving the dictum that soldiers experience many long hours of tedious boredom and a few minutes of stark terror. This should not be the case at the game table.

Manufacturing their own components, acquiring them, role-playing without them, or a combination of different approaches often makes for the best game play.

Material Components

Material components disintegrate upon the spell's casting. The channeled magic destroys the items, forcing the magic user to replace the material component. Material components act much like arrows: when an archer shoots his arrow, it is spent, and the archer must replace it. Material components act the exact same way, only the magic consumes or ruins the material components during the casting. Wizards and illusionists must replace these components regularly, or casting their spells becomes very difficult, if not impossible.

Material components include religious materials required by clerics and druids during their casting.

Players must acquire these components by purchasing them or finding them on their adventures. For general costs and acquisition of components, consult **Table 2.8** below.

Focus Components

Focus components are reusable. The spell's casting does not destroy them. These include items such as the gem necessary to cast *identity*. A single, one-time purchase by the caster and the item is kept until lost, stolen, or destroyed.

Divine Focus Components

Divine focus components refer to holy symbols or holy items necessary for druids and clerics to cast their spells. These foci help channel their deity's will and desire through the character, and the cleric or druid cannot cast spells without them. If destroyed in battle or lost, the divine caster must do without casting spells until he replaces the focus component.

Quality of Components

Magical components are generally unaffected by age or storage, and once purchased, they can serve the same purpose with the same outcome as if fresh and new. However, casters can purchase or acquire exceptional components. In this case, any such components grant the caster a +1 to any check they must make, or in the case that the spell affects someone/something else, the victim suffers a -1 to any required checks.

Exceptional items would include components derived from magical beasts, holly or mistletoe taken from a sacred grove, a holy symbol blessed by a high-level cleric or one that has returned from a holy quest, etc. The Castle Keeper must adjudicate the effects of such items, but in general, any item enhancing the spellcaster's spell, through magic, enhances its effects.

Example: A wizard possesses the eye of a basilisk. When he casts *arcane eye*, the magical nature of the eye grants him a +1 to his spot checks.

Availability of Material Components

Almost every town or city gives ready access to material components through shops designed for just such a clientele; even small villages have their seers who stock many items common to the magic-using trade. Enterprising magic users can harvest many components while on the road, and very careful ones scavenge the bodies of the fallen monsters for such materials they deem might enhance their spellcasting.

The Castle Keeper must determine the availability of any items the magic user may want to find on the road due to geography, season, etc. For example, finding clay in the desert or air underwater may be difficult.

Focus components are harder to locate while on the trail, but are readily available in most villages, towns, and cities. Prices vary; consult **Table 2.8** below.

Divine Focus items must generally come from their guild, order, or church, or in some circumstances, the druid or cleric may manufacture them (see below). Valuable ones, or ones high-level NPCs manufacture, may exist in treasure hoardes or be in the possession of villains or monsters. The **Players Handbook** covers costs of normal or silver holy symbols; for more elaborate symbols, consult **Table 2.7** below.

Loss of and Manufacturing New Holy Symbols

Druids and clerics both require holy symbols or something similar to cast their spells. These range from the very simple to the very ornate. A wooden holy symbol or one cast in gold and encrusted with jewels serves the same purpose. Generally speaking, casters purchase their holy symbols, which are made in silver according to the **Players Handbook**, or their guild/order/church awards them one. However, the rigors of the trail, the machinations of evil creatures, the constant engagement in combat, and the power of monsters often destroy holy symbols, leaving the druid or cleric without recourse to commune with the deity and procure new spells.

In such cases, most druids and clerics can fall back on their training and manufacture a facsimile of their holy item, allowing them to cast spells again. Doing so requires they make some type of penance to their deity to make amends for being careless with their holy symbol. The penance is entirely at the Castle Keeper's discretion; however, the CK must take into account the unusual nature of adventuring clerics, the cleric's value to the deity, the method the holy item was lost, and any other extenuating circumstances that may come into play.

Characters should be encouraged to choose a penance on their own, one that adheres to the game's ongoing themes, and one that does not distract from the adventure or become too dogmatic with any religious interpretation of spellcasting, events, etc. A good Castle Keeper works with the character to make the loss of the item a compelling moment in the adventure. The higher the caster's level, the more rigorous the required penance.

TABLE 2.6 PENANCE

Level	Penance
Low	Loses the ability to cast 1st-level spells for 30 days
Low	Loses the ability to cast 2nd level spells for 30 days
Mid	Loses the ability to cast 1st-3rd level spells for 30 days
Mid	Must take the forefront in any battle.
High	Loses the ability to cast 1st-7th level spells for 30 days
High	Must embark upon quest or found a church

Creating New Holy Symbols

To create a holy symbol from scratch, the cleric or druid must have some type of material available with which to actually craft the holy symbol. Wood or iron, grass to weave the pieces together, ink and brush to cast the symbol upon another surface, etc., will serve this purpose. For druids, mistletoe or holly also suffices. Casters must rest and commune for 24 hours, at the end of which time, they are granted a *bless* spell. Casting the *bless* spell on the item in question opens it as a channel to the deity, allowing the characters to gain full access to their spells — after any penance is paid, assuming the CK determines penance is necessary.

TABLE 2.7 VALUE OF THE HOLY SYMBOL

Description	Average GP Value
Clay	10
Wood	50
Wood with silver inlay	100
Wood with gold inlay	250
Wood with gemstones	500
Stone	100
Stone with gemstones	500
Bone with jewels	1000
Silver	250
Silver with gold	500

Silver with platinum	750
Silver with gemstones	1250
Ivory	500
Ivory with silver	750
Ivory with gold	1000
Ivory with gemstones	3000
Jade*	750
Jade* with ivory	1000
Jade* silver or gold	1250
Jade* with platinum	2000
Jade* with gemstones	5000
Gold	1000
Gold with platinum	3500
Gold with gemstones	7500
Platinum	10000
Platinum with gemstones	15000
Platinum with mithril	20000
Mithril	50000

*Or other precious stone.

The addition of gems to holy symbols also increases the value. Also, intricately designed holy symbols should possess a greater value.

Cost of Material Components

The **Players Handbook** lists material components in the spell description but often does not include a price. The interpretation is often that they are "free." This approach creates a simple, easy-to-follow magic system that does not require the players to keep up with distracting minutia. Role-playing through the acquisition and management of material components is often the easiest way to determine whether a player has the necessary items to cast spells.

When role-playing through the use and acquisition of material components, it is necessary to charge the magic user some price at some point. Generally, wizards and illusionists require more components, and they are more difficult to replace than those druids and clerics require. Every few games, the Castle Keeper should charge wizards and illusionists 20gp per level for the acquisition of components, which is more than fair. For example, a **4th level** wizard would pay 80gp every few games to resupply his material components. Castle Keepers should charge clerics and druids only 10gp per level every few games.

This method works, but it lends itself to giving spellcasters an advantage in that it assumes they always have the necessary components on-hand to cast their spells, when this would certainly not always be the case. The CK must adjudicate this according to circumstances. For instance, a *fireball* spell requires a lump of coal. If the character is adventuring in the Burnvetse Hills, where the hobgoblins routinely mine and use coal, then coal is probably readily available, found on the streets of a town, or in old camp sites, etc. However, if the party adventures to a city on the edge of the Frozen Salt Flats, where no coal is available, then the price is going to be much different.

The Castle Keeper must not overplay this. Making it impossible to acquire material components for spells can limit the players' ability to play their characters. However, it is essentially no different from a fighter losing his sword at sea: the fighter cannot immediately get a replacement, so he must find something else to use in the meantime. But just as swords and armor are common in **Castles & Crusades**, so too are merchants and wizards selling magical component to magic users of all shapes and sizes. Stores specializing in magical components naturally exist in all larger towns and cities, as well as in some smaller ones. The price of components these stores offer depends, like all things, on availability.

It is important to note that many components may be picked up along the trail for no cost at all. A magic user finding a small lump of clay along the road and securing it for future use with an *idol of death* spell need not worry about purchasing the clay.

Table 2.8 establishes a simple base price for the listed components for spells in the **Players Handbook**. These represent the components' baseline cost. **Table 2.9** establishes the amount of inflation CKs might decide to charge for components uncommon to a certain region. Use the base pricing for the items listed in **Table 2.8** for an item not currently on the list. Some of these items are readily replaceable, such as the vial of water. The base price denotes the cost of the container as much as it does the container's contents.

TABLE 2.8 PRICE OF MATERIAL COMPONENTS

Spell	Component	Price
Acid Arrow	Acid (vial, 10 drops)	5gp
Animal Friendship	Food (small bag)	1sp
Animal Messenger	Food (small bag)	1sp
Animate Dead	Bones	5sp
Arcane Eye	Eye (dried, one)	1gp
Barkskin	Bark (5 pieces)	1cp
Bind Elemental	Vial of Element[1]	1gp
Binding	Iron Dust (bag, 5 pinches)	5sp
Clone	Flesh	Special
Color Spray	Colored Stones	2sp
Commune	Religious Item	Special
Cone of Cold	Vial of Water	—
Consecrate	Religious Materials	25gp
Control Water	Air	n/a
Control Weather	Storm Giant Hair[2]	170gp
Create Greater Undead	Religious Items	100gp
Create Undead	Bone Dust	3gp
Darkness	Dust of Broken Mirror	5sp
Daze	Wool (5 pinches)	5cp
Delayed Blast Fireball	Coal (1 lump)	2cp
Disintegrate	Cockatrice Feather	5sp
Divination	Religious Materials	1gp
Dragon Breath	Dust of Dragon	10gp
Dragon Mount	Dust of Dragon	10gp

Dragon Scales	Dragon Scale	30gp
Dragon Shadow	Dust of Dragon	10gp
Dreaming	Blood of a Nightmare	5gp
Earthquake	Chip of Stone cast by Giant	10gp
Enhance Attribute	Animal Hair	1sp
Faithful Hound	Dust of Dog Bone	5sp
False Trap	Broke/Dist. Mirror Glass	5gp
False Vision	Broke/Dist. Mirror Glass	5gp
Fireball	Coal (1 lump)	2 cp
Fire Seeds	Acorn, Holly Berries (5)	1cp
Fire Shield	Open Flame	Special
Fire Trap	Flint/Charcoal	1gp
Floating Disk	Glass or Metal Disk	5gp
Fly	Feather (5 wrapped)	1cp
Ghost Sound	Ear Wax (3 plugs)	1cp
Globe of Invulnerability	Bead & Glass Sphere	1gp, 1sp
Glyph of Warding	Religious Materials	200gp, 3sp
Greater Scrying	Gem	1000gp
Guards & Wards	See **Players Handbook**	28gp
Hallow	Religious Materials	1000gp
Hallucinatory Terrain	Dust of a Nixie Arrow	10gp
Haste	Hawk Feather	5sp
Hold Animal/Person	Spider Silk	5sp
Hold Monster	Spider Silk, Giant	20gp
Humanoid Finding	Possession	Special
Ice Storm	Vial of Water	1cp
Identify	Gem, Ink	100gp
Idol of Death	Clay	5cp
Illusory Script	Special Ink	50gp
Instant Summons	Item	Special
Invisibility	Tar Wrapped Eye	1gp
Invisibility Sphere	Fur Wrapped Eye (animal)	5sp
Ironwood	Iron Dust (bag, 5 pinches)	5sp
Jump	Cricket Leg (5)	1cp
Legend Lore	Materials	250gp
Lightning Bolt	Iron Rod	1sp
Magic Circle	Salt (pure, box/bag)	2sp
Magic Jar	Gem	1000gp
Magic Stones	Stones	n/a
Major Creation	Ghost's Breath	10gp
Mass Invisibility	Spider Eyes (dust)	1gp
Mass Suggestion	Wool (5 pinches)	5cp
Minor Creation	Piece of Material	Special
Minor Globe of Invul.	Bead/Sphere	1gp
Mirage Arcana	Dust of Nixie Arrow	10gp
Mnemonic Enhancer	Materials	100gp
Move Earth	Earthworm	1cp
Nondetection	Mirror	50gp
Passwall	Candle Wax (5 pinches)	2cp
Permanent Image	Lens	100gp
Polymorph Any Object	Butterfly Wings/Clay	1sp
Polymorph	Butterfly Wings	5cp
Programmed Image	Lens	100gp
Project Image	Doll	1sp
Protection/Alignment	Lode Stone	5sp
Pyrotechnics	Open Flame	n/a
Refuge	Materials	1000gp
Resurrection	Diamond Dust/Urn	1000gp
Scare	Undead Flesh/Bone	5gp
Scrying	Glass Object	5gp
Secret Page	Paste of Fish	50gp
Secure Shelter	Chip/Material	1cp
See Invisibility	Pinch of Dust/Powder	1cp
Sending	Parchment	1cp
Sequester	Eye/Eyestalk	500gp
Shapechange	Materials	2500gp
Shape Stone or Wood	Wood Chip	1cp
Shatter	Shell or Similar	5sp
Shield of Faith	Holy/Unholy Water Drop	1sp
Simulacrum	Materials	1000gp
Sleep	Sand/Pillow Feather	1cp
Snare	Tree Vine	3sp
Soul Bind	Gem	5000gp
Spider Climb	Spider	2cp
Stinking Cloud	Foul Smelling Material	5cp
Suggestion	Wool (5 pinches)	5cp
Summon Familiar	Material	100gp
Symbol	Material	5000gp
Teleportation Circle	Golden Thread	100gp
Temporal Stasis	Diamond	5000gp
Tiny Hut	Opaque Glass Ball	1gp
Transmute Flesh to Stone	Clay/Stone	5sp
Trap the Soul	Gem	1000gp
True Resurrection	Materials	5000gp
True Seeing	Materials	250gp
Unseen Servant	Gem	5gp
Wall of Fire	Burnt Wood	2cp
Wall of Force	Materials	200gp
Wall of Ice	Materials	Special
Wall of Iron	Iron Dust (bag, 5 pinches)	5sp
Wall of Stone	Wall Stone	7cp
Wall of Thorns	Thorn (vial 5)	5cp
Water Breathing	Straw (5 in bundle)	2gp

Unless noted, the component is for one casting.

Special prices refer to those the CK must put in place.

Religious Materials consist of incense, bones, holy cloth, beads, etc.

[1] These vials contain the element of choice: air, earth, water, or fire. They are magically contained and vibrant.

[2] Storm giant hair is very heavy, about 20 pounds per inch.

As discussed, some components may be rare in some regions, thus making the prices slightly higher, or they may be more common, making the prices slightly lower. Consult **Table 2.9** for cost adjustments due to availability. Use the established baseline as listed above.

TABLE 2.9 AVAILABILITY AND COST OF COMPONENTS

Availability	Price Adjustment
Magical*	x100
Indigenous	+5%
Non-Indigenous	+10%
Alien	+50%

Selling Material Components/Materials

From time to time, characters may seek to sell magical components. Adventures often yield the enterprising magic user a host of items that others may manufacture into magical potions or use as spell components. They must first find a market for them; these are almost always in larger towns, though at the CK's discretion, some smaller towns may have a seer or magic user in need of such components.

For the vast majority of components, consult **Table 2.8** for the base market price. Cross reference the price with **Table 2.9** for its availability in the region. Divide the total by half, and that is the going price for that component at any merchant shop in the area. Any negotiations beyond that point are entirely up to the Castle Keeper.

For exotic components, such as a dragon scale, basilisk hide, cockatrice eye, wyvern blood, and the like, consult **Table 2.10 Base Value of Components**, and then multiply the value of the item by the creature's HD to come up with the component's base value. The base value should then be multiplied by availability in **Table 2.9 Availability and Cost of Components**. The table does not provide an exhaustive list, so CK's should use it as a reference. The total is then divided by half.

For example a character desiring to buy the eye of a basilisk would take the price for a normal eye, 1gp (per **Table 2.10**), and multiply it by 6 for its HD. That cost would then be multiplied by 100 (per **Table 2.9**) The cost of a basilisk eye is 600gp. The total divided by half, for a selling price of 300gp.

TABLE 2.10 BASE VALUE OF COMPONENTS

Component	Value	Component	Value
Eye	1gp	Nail/Claw	1gp
Hair	1sp	Horn	5gp
Scale	1gp	Feather	1gp
Skin	1sp	Ears	15gp
Blood	5gp	Teeth/Fang	5gp

Playing Without Components

As previously mentioned, role-playing component management can be irksome, and often players and Castle Keepers alike ignore the spell component issue for spellcasting. Keeping tabs of the materials, their cost, and the amount on hand, etc., can create a tremendous amount of note-taking for the player. Then there is the issue of placing them on the character's body in such a manner as to be retrievable in a matter of moments, which is more note-taking. It is easy enough to downplay this aspect of components, requiring the magic user, instead, to pay a lump sum for components, and not worry about storing them.

Some, however, may wish to jettison this approach altogether. Before doing this, consider game balance. Several alternate magic systems are offered below that may help to address this issue, but for CKs who do not desire to take on any new rules, it is a simple matter of role-playing component acquisition.

Castles & Crusades is deliberately designed as a role-playing game with a loose, open rules system to allow players some interpretation, and, in fact, it encourages players and CKs to adjust the rules to suit their own gaming style. In general, any time a gaming group abandons a balancing rules system such as component management, they should create some counter-balance to replace it; failure to do so often results in one-sided games; in the case of spellcasters, higher level characters become very unbalancing.

Wands and Holy Symbols

In lieu of using spell components as traditionally envisioned and employed, imagine if the wizard, illusionist, cleric, or druid simply had to use a wand or holy symbol to focus the energies of those components. Not only does this dispense with the vast amount of problems in keeping up with spell components, it brings into play the traditional wizard's wand and makes the cleric's holy symbol very useful.

Note: The wand and holy symbol are not replacements for spellcasting in general, and have no effect on casting time, duration, range, power, etc.; they are just used to channel the components' power for spells.

Wand & Holy Symbol as Receptacles of Power

These are the two enigmatic identifiers for the spellcasting classes. However, in traditional **Castles & Crusades** they offer little in the way of use and are often overlooked or ignored, except in extraordinary moments, such as turning undead or when a wizard finds a magical wand.

In this alternative method, the wand and holy symbol hold power. The essential concept is that spellcasters gather the material components of a spell they wish to cast and confer the material components to the wand or holy symbol. When casting the spell, spellcasters must use their wand or holy symbol to focus the energies held within. This method presents another method of gathering and managing spell components.

Conferring Spell Components to a Wand or Holy Symbol

To manage this, the spellcaster must still gather all the requisite material components for a spell. In some cases, spells have material components already detailed in their description. In other cases, consult **Table 2.8 Price of Material Components** above.

Example: *Augury* requires an item of at least 25gp in value to cast; on the other hand, *barkskin* simply requires a piece of bark. Gathering bark is simple, easy, and cheap (0gp), whereas the item for *augury* could be a 25gp gem, a platinum disc worth 25gp, a mirror, etc. These items would need to be collected.

A wand or holy symbol should be limited in the number of spell components (per spell) it can hold. The cost and limitations are discussed below. However, let's take an example where a wand can hold up to 30 spell components for spells. That means, the components for 30 spells must be "placed" within the item. For instance, this can be 30 pieces of bark, enabling the druid to cast *barkskin* 30 times with the material components coming from the holy symbol.

But, let's assume the druid wants to put in material components for *barkskin*, *animal messenger*, and *animal friendship,* enough for 10 castings of each. The druid must gather the material components for 10 castings of each spell and enter them into the holy symbol.

So, the rule is that the wand or holy symbol can hold a certain amount of spell components limited by its description. The number of times the wand or holy symbol can be used to focus those material components is equal to the amount of material components placed into the wand or holy symbol.

A Ritual for Placing the Material Components into Wands and Holy Symbols

Although the **CKG** offers no specific method for placing the power of the material components into a wand or holy symbol, it can be assumed that the wand or holy symbol is magical and that simply touching the material components absorbs them into the wand. If the CK requires a more involved ritual, then perhaps gathering the components and placing them together with the item in question and either melting, crushing, or immolating them binds all these items together; the item is forged after that with an incumbent cost in gold and time.

Example: A **5th level** cleric wants to imbue his holy symbol with some spells' material components. He collects the material components for 10 *animate dead* spells and 10 *control water* spells. He then locates a large metal pot to place the items in. He then builds a fire in a holy spot, hallowed ground, or sanctified area and places his holy symbol in the pot with the items. He then places the pot over the fire and chants, prays, etc., while the action takes place.

Whatever ritual the CK or players design should cost about 1sp per spell in material components in addition to the cost of necessary components.

The length of time required to perform the ritual should be one hour per level of the spell times the number of spells. So, a cleric undertaking this action for *control weather* (**7th level**) and *control water* (**4th level**) would perform an 11-hour ritual to meld the components into his holy symbol. It does not matter how many spell component parts are in the cauldron; the number of components does not affect the ritual's time.

Holy Symbols and Wands and Cost

The cost of a holy symbol or wand should reflect its power to hold spell components. In general, the cost is 1gp per component times the level of the spell being placed in the item. This means a wand that can hold enough components to cast 50 1st-level spells would cost 50 gp (0-level spells cost nothing). Likewise, a holy symbol's cost for holding the same amount of spells is comparable. A wand holding component parts for 10 1st-level spells and 10 2nd-level spells would cost 10gp+20gp, for a total of 30gp. The cost of the wand and holy symbol can become exorbitant. In a low-fantasy setting, a CK might want to halve the cost.

Casting Spells with a Wand or Holy Symbol

The spellcasters cast spells normally, except the use of material components is only necessary upon charging the wand or holy symbol with spells. Each time the spellcaster casts a spell, he marks off the component number for the wand or holy symbol. The wand or holy symbol is included as part of the somatic movement for casting the spell, as well.

MAGIC ITEMS

Using this method opens the door for the development of several new magic items. The magic items would be those with the component imbued within the wand, making spellcasting easier. Also, the use of wands and holy symbols would become emblematic of holy orders or wizard guilds. Acquiring them could be expensive, or the temple/church/order/guild could confer the items as gifts to the characters for performance of duties or adventures.

BUYING, SELLING, TRADING

There are several ways for wizards or illusionists to acquire their spells. Wresting them from the clutches of long-dead wizards, plundering them from dungeons, or stealing them from a dragon's hoard offer the erstwhile mage the most common approaches. However, the wizard may seek particular spells that he has not located through the usual methods; at such times, the wizard may, instead, seek to purchase any sought spells or trade for them.

Buying

To purchase a spell, the character must have access to another wizard, an order, or guild willing to sell spells. Spells are not like weapons, and they are rarely sold on the open market. Many wizards in possession of spells have little or no interest in selling them, as they most likely earned the spells through a long, hard road of toil and danger. Yet, some wizards exist who may be interested in selling them for whatever reason. Such wizards generally dwell in both large and small communities or even alone; player characters have the greatest likelihood of encountering a wizard with spells to sell in one of the larger towns (consult **Chapter 4: NPCs** for the chance to encounter wizards). In the end, the CK must determine if the character can encounter such a person or institution and whether or not it fits into the mold of the game's ongoing adventures.

When the character finds someone willing to sell spells, consult the following table:

TABLE 2.11 SPELL PURCHASE COST

Level	Cost of GP
1	100
2	200
3	400
4	800
5	1600
6	3200
7	6400
8	12800
9	25600

Many factors can contribute to the cost of the spell. The seller's alignment, the market conditions, the spell's rarity, the spell's power, the player character's reputation, etc. The Castle Keeper must make on-the-spot decisions about possible influences on a spell's final cost. The above table is just a suggested reference; the CK should raise or lower (in the case of a good reputation or good deed provided) the spell's cost by a spell rank if any of the influences mentioned affect the sale.

Trading

Trading spells is a more common practice among wizards and illusionists than selling them. Characters entering a town in hopes of gaining new spells must first find someone or some institution likely to have the desired spells; local wizards, apothecaries, guilds, and other similar organizations might have spellcasters willing to trade with the characters. Trading spells requires a great deal of NPC interaction (see **Chapter 4 below**), and the CK must prep the game for it. The town must be large enough or possess reason enough to attract a high-level wizard or illusionist. The availability of a wizard in any given settlement is entirely up to the CK's discretion. One contributing factor on a wizard's availability would be how commonplace wizards are in the Castle Keeper's campaign setting.

For CK's preferring a quick reference, roll on **Table 2.12 Availability to Trade** to determine if a particular settlement type has a wizard/guild with which the character can trade. A successful roll denotes a wizard/guild is available to trade and has something interesting for the character, as appropriate for the character's level. Roll an unmodified d20.

TABLE 2.12 AVAILABILITY TO TRADE

Habitation	Size	CL
Thorp	40	18
Hamlet	200	15
Village	500	12
Town	2000	9
City	10000	6
Metropolis	20000+	3

Once the CK determines if such a wizard/guild is present, the trade can begin. The general rule when trading is that NPCs expect an even trade: a **9th level** spell for a **9th level** spell, for instance. The trading wizard possesses 2-5 tradable spells. The Castle Keeper must roll the spells randomly from the trading caster's appropriate spell lists; the spells traded must be useful to the NPC and not simply throw-away spells or spells he already possesses.

Alignment, personality, and the player character's reputation all may affect the transaction; such things must be adjudicated by the CK, but in general, raise or lower the price by one spell rank. If the character attempts to woo the trader, he may make a charisma check; if successful, the spell's ranking is raised by one level, allowing the player character to gain more than the traded spell's value, which may be helpful if the caster has very few spells.

Example: Boris, a **5th level** wizard, finds a local guild willing to trade spells. Upon entering the establishment, he begins negotiating. The CK rolls a d4+1 to determine the establishment's number of tradable spells. With a 3 result, the establishment has 3 tradable spells available. As a **5th level** wizard, Boris can cast **0**, **1st** and **2nd level** spells. The CK rolls randomly, coming up with two **1st level** and one **2nd level** spell. Boris attempts to influence the transactions with his charisma. He makes the check against the HD of the trading wizard (**5th level**) with no bonuses. Boris possesses a +1 due to his charisma, which is one of his prime attributes. He rolls 17+1 for attribute bonus and adds +5 for his level, giving him a total of 23. With charisma a prime, he needs only roll a 17 to make the check (12+5, the trading wizard's level). Boris successfully rolls 17 or higher. Boris now gains one extra spell slot and can trade one **1st level** spell for two 1st-level spells or for one **2nd level** spell; or he can trade a **2nd level** spell for a **3rd level** spell (which he cannot yet cast, but he can certainly add to his spellbook).

Lawful good wizards/guilds do not trade spells with evil creatures or evil persons unless it serves the greater good.

EXPERIENCE POINTS FOR SPELLS

For magic-using classes, casting spells is a major source of knowledge and experience. Each time casters learn and cast new spells, they learn new things. Granting experience points for spellcasting is an optional rule wherein each new spell the caster uses grants him a certain amount of experience (see **Table 2.13 Spell Experience Points**). Magic users (as noted, this includes the wizard, illusionist, cleric, and druid classes) only earn experience points for casting spells they have never cast before, and then only for the first time they cast them. Consider any extra benefit they may gain from casting the spell a second or third time as part of the normal experience point acquisition due to monster death, role-playing, or adventure totals.

TABLE 2.13 SPELL EXPERIENCE POINTS

Level	XP	Level	XP	Level	XP
1	50	4	400	7	5000
2	100	5	900	8	12000
3	200	6	2000	9	25000

INTERPRETING MAGIC IN C&C

The rules as established in the **Players Handbook** supply the basics for all spells, but certain spells and types of magic are open to interpretation or may require more explanation and clarification. The following section provides further explanation about divine magic, the illusionist's magic, and the behavior of certain spells. It also presents optional magic systems for the CK to consider implementing into the **C&C** game.

DIVINE MAGIC

Clerics and druids derive their power from the deities they worship, so their magic is considered divine magic. These deities' channeled magic originates, in some cases, from the ether, but at times, the gods draw it directly from their own beings; in the latter case, this channeled magic is a part of them they have chosen to place within the divine caster. The greater the cleric or druid, the greater the trust his god places in him, and the greater the divine caster's powers and abilities are. As a cleric or druid moves up in the hierarchy of his deity's followers, the recognition he gains from his powers grows, and with this growth comes responsibility, influence, and - just as importantly -expectations. The **PH's** level system and accompanying spell lists provide for the divine caster's power growth, reflecting the ever-greater powers his deity or deities grant him. However, they do not provide for deeds done in the service of the god or recognition from the deity for that service and those deeds. Yet the gods pay heed to those who serve them well, and they forget or ignore those who serve them poorly or not at all.

Note: Remember that clerics are generally different from the priesthood. Clerics serve as the fighting arm of their religion, and as such, they do not normally concern themselves with lay persons, conversions, worshipers, or the like. They are answerable only to the priesthood occupying the holy sanctuaries.

A **1st level** cleric, unless granted some benefice from his heritage or the Castle Keeper, should be assumed to be only one of many serving his god, and, for this reason, he receives little or no recognition from his deity. Though the deity surely recognizes him as a devoted worshiper who calls upon him, the god's mind is bent elsewhere, and whether this small, wandering cleric lives or dies is of little import to the god. But as that cleric gains experience, builds a name for himself and his god, destroys evil in the name of the deity, and brings recognition and glory to the deity's power, the god begins to take note, watching him more intently, and offering his aid in ever greater amounts to keep the cleric alive.

Even more, when a cleric establishes holy ground, sanctifying it in the name of the deity, creating a place to bring others into the fold, then that cleric becomes a treasure to the deity, a treasure he will guard carefully, keeping him from harm when he may. The ground, too, becomes sacred, the god settling upon it powers that reside in the earth, stone, water, and fire of the place. Clerics residing on holy ground may actually benefit when casting spells or performing service while on the sacred ground. The older the ground, the more residual power resides there, so that ancient temples become pillars of power in their own right, whether the god resides there still or has long been forgotten in the minds of men, dwarves, elves, or any of the peoples of the world.

Holy Ground

This optional rule allows for clerics casting spells upon holy ground to gain special advantages from the temple itself, where the deity has placed his will and power within; his will and power enhance the serving clerics' casting abilities. As the clerics' divine magic is attuned to the god or gods they worship, the greater the clerics' powers are when serving their lord upon his spiritual ground. Basically, while on his sacred ground, the deity's clerics can draw forth any residual magic the god has settled upon the sanctified ground.

Creating the Holy Ground

Holy ground is ground consecrated and hallowed with the appropriate spells, *consecrate* and *hallow*, and permanently holds at least 100,000gp worth of religious buildings or artifacts dedicated to the deity upon it. Ancient holy ground, where perhaps the wealth of religious buildings has declined from the value of 100,000gp, may act as holy ground purely at the behest of the Castle Keeper. Unoccupied holy ground retains its power purely at the Castle Keeper's discretion, as well.

At minimum, the holy ground's level equals its creating cleric's level, but it may actually exceed it if its main occupant is more powerful than the sacred land's creator. For example, it requires a **7th level** cleric to cast the spell *hallow*, which is necessary to create holy ground, so the holy ground is minimally **7th level**. However, if a **24th level** Apostle occupies the holy ground, the ground attunes to him and elevates itself to **24th level**, so long as that Apostle occupies the ground. All holy ground has a

permanent *sanctuary* cast upon it - at least until an equal-level cleric successfully curses it. Any individual of a similar alignment or in the service of the deity benefits from the *sanctuary* upon entering the holy ground.

Table 2.14 Magical Effects of Holy Ground reflects advantages, called benefices, the cleric gains upon entering onto or casting spells while upon holy ground. The cleric's level determines what benefices he gains. These benefices are cumulative. The cleric gains them only if the cleric is a servant of that deity or at least a servant of that deity's pantheon.

TABLE 2.14 MAGICAL EFFECTS OF HOLY GROUND

Level	Cleric	Benefice Gained
1	Deacon	Blessed with an effect identical to *consecrate*
2	Acolyte	+1 bonus to all attribute checks associated with any spell
3	Lector	Automatic *augury* 1/day
4	Sacrodote	Detect the truth when spoken to 3/day
5	Warden	Permanent protection from alignment
6	Priest	Alignment is revealed 3/day
7	Exarch	Spell duration doubles
8	Officiate Priest	+1 bonus to all attribute checks associated with any spell
9	Canon	Fear or similar attacks are powerless
10-11	Bishop, Cardinal Priest	Blessed wtih an effect identical to *hallow*
12-15	Confessor	Voice possesses power of *command* spell
16-18	Elder	+1 bonus to all attribute checks associated with any spell
19-21	Hierarch, High Priest	Automatic *cure disease*, *blindness*, and *remove curse* 1/day
22-23	Patriarch, Pontiff, Prelate	Voice carries the power of a *geas* spell 1/day
24	Apostle	Lesser undead automatically destroyed

Example: Angrod the dwarf, Merrick the paladin, and Koetel the cleric, stumble through the forest, fleeing from a pack of ghouls. To their amazement, they find the ruins of an ancient temple built to the glory of Koetel's own deity. Immediately upon entering the holy ground all three gain the protection of a *sanctuary* spell. Unbeknownst to them, the Bishop Hasunoff, a **17th level** cleric, created the holy ground, giving it the powers of a **17th level** holy ground; the *sanctuary* affecting them acts as if a **17th level** cleric cast it, making the ghouls have to overcome a CL 17 check to attack the characters on the holy ground. Furthermore, Koetel, as a **4th level** cleric, enjoys *all* the abilities **Table 2.14** grants to 1st- through **4th level** clerics.

Healing in the Temporal World

In a world where magic dominates and clerics can heal and cure disease, it would seem most improbable that any illness or long-term suffering should exist. But the cleric's healing abilities should not translate into a willingness to heal everyone or even equate to a desire to see all suffering removed from the continual struggle that defines life. Every deity and every religion and its followers view the world in a different light and act accordingly. Many religions believe the fire of suffering brings forth the courage of redemption; this philosophy reads much differently than the belief that all beings should live the life of an orgiastic, drug-induced philosopher, where all beings deserve an equal share. So clerics, sitting upon their holy ground, see the world through the prism of their own god, and his own musings govern their outlook. Whether or not they cure the suffering is up to the deity, not the cleric, and more often than not, the deity is unconcerned with the suffering of those unable to bear a great deal of suffering themselves.

It is not uncommon for unbelievers to come to the holy ground to seek aid and cures from the resident priesthood; it is uncommon for the resident priests to actually render that aid, however. They do so only if it benefits the priesthood or their god. If enough sacrifice is made, then the priests may be more willing to cast the necessary spells to cure those seeking aid. But in general, clerics, paladins, and priests generally avoid mass healings, rarely worrying about the suffering of man.

Clerics as Medics

Clerics almost never wander about casting spells on people, as they are the spear point of any religion, its fighting arm, and worrying over healing the sick and wounded rarely comes into play; they leave that to the priesthood of their varying religions. If a cleric heals one of his adventuring comrades, it is more to serve his own ends and to personify the power of his deity than it is to aid the character who has fallen wounded. Though aiding a friend may play a role in the decision to heal, the greater glory of the deity is far more important than the friend's life. "Allow me to grant my god's benefice upon you so that you may know her strength and power, mended now only through the will and sufferance of Wenafar."

Generally, portraying or playing clerics as walking-medics leads to the wrong impression of what a cleric truly is. Clerics do not hang in the back to heal others, but surge forward in battle in order to display the courage of their patron and god - that is, unless theirs is a healing god whose clerics best serve him by remaining in the rear and aiding the fallen. But in general, clerics best exemplify their patron with their unbridled courage and willingness to fight and die for their patron's causes, whether that be protecting the "weak" or their battle companions or riding off to war.

Worshipers & Conversion

Religions in **C&C** are generally pantheistic religions which do not act as proselytizing religions. Odin does not care if three people worship him or three million. Odin is a god, a creature in his own right, born of the god Borr and the giantess Bestla. He lived long before the making of the world, struggling with the frost giants. To him, men are but insignificant creatures passing

through his memory, their only value lying in their courage and their battle usefulness in the final battle of Ragnarok.

It would no more occur to a follower of Odin to convert someone to his worship than it would to Odin himself. If a traveler paid homage to Odin along the road, and in doing so tried for a place in Valhalla, it would not matter to Odin if the traveler worshipped him or not. The traveler's valor places him above those who call Odin father but do not possess the courage to defend Asgard in the final battle.

Conversion, for most of these pantheistic religions, is irrelevant, as is the number of worshipers a god may or may not have. Some RPGs connect a god's power to the number of worshipers he or she possesses; but, in the grim reality of a god's existence, this number surely ebbs and flows, and so does not generally serve as a good indicator of the god's power. A god's power lies outside the world of man, is drawn from the magical power of the cosmos, and each deity is different, having more or less access to this cosmic power - with some gods perhaps having stolen it from other gods. That being said, a CK may certainly choose to attach a god's power to his worshippers, but **C&C** does not assume worshippers to be the source of any deity's power, so conversion is not an assumed duty of the cleric's class.

Pantheons

In a pantheistic religion, the cleric should not necessarily be restricted to the worship of any one deity. In a world where they all exist, calling upon any one of many loosely related deities can gain the cleric the attention he or she needs. In general, clerics should choose the pantheon they worship, not the deity; however, for the cleric to gain particular benefits, such as weapon choice, he must call one deity his patron and be faithful to that one deity.

HOLY WATER

On the open market, holy water costs 30gp for a flask; this is roughly equal to 1 pint of holy water. Generally, any cleric of 1st level or higher possesses the ability to create holy water through the spell *bless water*. By casting the spell, the blessed water assumes a holy nature, sanctified with the ability to harm the undead and evil creatures in general. Only holy water created on holy ground can be used by anyone other than the creating cleric; holy water created by a cleric outside holy ground has limited abilities, see **Spell Behavior** below.

Holy water serves as a weapon in the hands of a cleric or anyone able to use it. If splashed with a full dose of holy water, an evil or undead creature suffers 2d4 points of damage. Each pint of holy water holds four doses. Holy water can serve as a holy symbol, as well, so long as the vessel containing it has been hallowed by a **7th level** cleric casting *hallow*. Furthermore, if sprinkled upon the ground around the cleric or party, the holy water acts as a *magic circle* for 1d8 melee rounds. The CK should roll the holy water's effective rounds behind the screen, keeping the potency of the holy water a secret to heighten the game's tension.

Aspergillum (Holy Water Sprinkler)

The aspergillum or holy water sprinkler is a mace, hammer, or morningstar whose damage-inflicting end is hollow and able to contain holy water. Upon any successful strike, the water in the holy water sprinkler may splash out of small holes drilled in the metal, splattering an enemy. This water cannot be controlled; if it is in the holy water sprinkler, any time that weapon strikes an opponent with enough force to score an actual hit, the jarring nature of the blow shakes some of the water out, inflicting 1d4 points of damage on undead or evil creatures.

ILLUSIONIST

Illusionist spells tend to baffle and confuse players and Castle Keepers alike. The source of the illusion is often as confusing as the illusion itself. The word "illusion" itself seems to connote the magic user's magic is purely illusionary, unreal, meaning a strong or schooled mind can see through the illusion's trickery and machinations and entirely ignore its effects. Yet, this could not be more wrong. Some of the illusions are, in fact, simple illusions, while others are the mind's conquest over matter, and still others are channeled magic displayed with such force that their conjured elements are as real as a wizard's *magic missile* or a cleric's *spiritual weapon*.

To understand the illusionist's spells, we must first understand the illusionist. The illusionist is a magic-using class whose title does not necessarily equate to his skill set. "Illusionist" is a class description, a generalized word establishing distance from the wizard. It defines a class that uses magic in a subtle but very different manner than the wizard, druid, or cleric. He is not a trickster. The illusionist has no skills that allow him to "fool" or "trick" his targets into believing something is what it isn't. Such skills belong in the domain of a street urchin, jester, or some other buffoon who has no recourse in making his way in the world than tricking others through his sleight of hand. The illusionist is a master of magic, bending his back in years of study to rise to the level of even a beginner in his craft. The illusionist is a master of time and substance. His abilities transcend the simple "illusions" of a trickster in that the illusionist conjures material from the essence of the world around him. His "illusions" are not simple parlor tricks to fool the weak of mind, but are powerful incantations drawing upon his own powerful mind. He weaves these musings with magic drawn from the world around him, thereby fabricating the very stuff of reality. Illusionists can literally create something from nothing.

A misconception exists that someone knowing a particular character is an illusionist would, therefore, possess some kind of immunity to his illusions, but this idea is an absolute misreading of the class's descriptor.

First, no illusionist would introduce himself as an illusionist. That would be as silly as someone introducing himself as an "assassin," "rogue," or "thief." Such titles would immediately make others wary of the individual, and in some cases, could prove to be an automatic death sentence.

Second, an illusionist's magic does not require *belief*. As noted above, this is a misconception of the class and its abilities. The illusionist is no trickster, and one cannot simply choose to "disbelieve" the illusionist's magic, thereby rendering his spells ineffective. This is simply not the case. Though some of the illusionist's spells are hypnotic, many if not most of the illusionist's spells have real, tangible effects regardless of their victim's belief.

The illusionist is not a less-than-adequate mage, but an adventurer with the ability to wield powerful sorcery, summoning and shaping the world around him like no other, bringing to life reality created by his own mind. His power does not reside within the victims of his spells. Instead, the illusionist's power lies within the illusionist himself and his ability to manipulate the world around him and the magic inherent in the world. If anything, the illusionist is superior to the standard mage, as he can fabricate something from nothing.

Additionally, it is worth noting that not every spell the illusionist casts is an "illusion," and all illusions do not work the same way.

CKs cannot have a too-literal definition of the illusionist. Doing so kills the usefulness and creative potential of the class itself. As with many things in **C&C**, the CK and players must think outside of the box. The following section details four different interpretations of illusions. These might apply to only a few spells or all of them as the game requires. It is up to the Castle Keeper, often consulting with the player, to determine the nature of the illusionist and his spells. Each spell may be different than the next, but some understanding of this must be arrived at before the game begins. This is not something the **CKG** addresses, as each game table should interpret the illusions for themselves.

PHOTONIC: Illusions composed solely of light, photonic illusions have no substance and cannot be affected by physical means, but can be affected by anything which specifically affects light (such as a *darkness* spell). Sighted creatures can perceive the image, and intelligent creatures should be able to quickly determine its nature. Photonic objects cannot be picked up or moved (unless they are anchored to a real object), burned, or broken, because there is literally nothing there but an image. In that same respect, the photonic illusion can cause no direct harm, but may lead to indirect harm, such as using an illusion to conceal a real trap. Barriers of this type can be passed through as if they are not there. At middle to high levels, the caster may be able to support the visual illusion by adding sound, smell, or even tactile characteristics to the illusion. A saving throw does not appy to the photonic illusion because in and of itself the illusion cannot cause harm; it might conceal harm, but it does not directly cause damage. Examples include *continual flame* and *darkness*.

PLASMIC: These illusions are actually physical in nature, composed of an ectoplasmic substance which takes the shape of the simulated object and which the illusionist colors by photonic means to appear real. These objects are delicate in nature, having no more than one hit point per caster level, so destroying them is relatively easy. Because these types of illusions are "real" in the sense that they have physical substance, they can cause physical harm. In that same sense, a caster of middle level could actually create simple, useful objects, such as a weapon or a tent or a rope, that function as if they are real. At higher levels, the illusionist may even be able to create objects which simulate more esoteric characteristics, such as lantern oil which burns or food and water that can provide real sustenance. Illusions of this type cannot simulate voids, such as pits or passageways, through solid objects. A saving throw does not necessarily apply to a plasmic illusions; the spell-caster could use such illusions to swing in melee combat or drop rocks from above, etc. Though the saving throw does not apply, the caster or his creation has to successfully hit as in melee combat, or the target must make a dexterity check to dodge the rock. Examples include *minor creation* and *fog cloud*.

HYPNOTIC: These types of illusions only exist in the mind of those affected by the magic. Virtually anything may be simulated this way, provided that both the caster and the spell's target have the mental capacity to conceive the illusion. This type of illusion does not affect mindless creatures. The power of the hypnotic illusion is in the belief that it is real. As long as this belief lasts, those who perceive the illusion act and react as though it truly exists. Passing through physical barriers is impossible, but on the other hand, picking up objects is possible, and created traps or monsters can cause damage. However, these things only exist in the believer's mind. Any damage taken is perceived to be physical, but it is actually a figment of the mind. A character eating illusionary food could starve while he thinks his belly is full. A character believing he has taken enough damage to die may actually die of shock, but he will have no real wounds. As soon as belief in the illusion ends, the character realizes the damage isn't real, and he regains any hit points lost to the illusion. Characters successfully defeating their belief in the illusion may be able to convince others of its illusory nature. Examples include *hypnotic pattern*.

MENTAL: The mental illusion works similar to the hypnotic one in that the illusion exists only in the believer's mind. What makes a mental illusion different from a hypnotic one is the nature of the spell's effects. Hypnotic illusions can only damage the psyche, and once the illusion is disbelieved, the damage goes away. Mental illusions cause real, physical damage, even after the target realizes the attack was only an illusion. Mental illusions do not affect mindless creatures such as a mold. The target's belief in the illusion is so strong that his own mind causes the damage. The illusionist, of course, is the source of this damage, channeling the magic of his craft through the target's mind and psyche; the target's psyche itself is a conduit for the illusionist's magic. The illusionist projects his power into the target's mind, causing the target's own belief to actually break his own bones or split open his own flesh. Any damage caused in this way remains, even after the character casts out the illusionist's magic. Such physical effects of mental attacks should not be limited to causing damage. After all, if the character's own mind actually caused wounds to the body

because of an illusionary attack, then it stands to reason (and maintains a sense of consistency, balance, and fair play) that the character's own mind can heal those same wounds if he were the recipient of an illusionary healing spell. Anything the mind can do, it can undo. Treat other types of effects the same way. If the character believes there is a bridge over the bottomless pit, then his own mind will carry him safely across that bridge. If he believes that he has grown wings out of his back, then his own mind will give him the power of flight. If he believes he carries a magic item, then that item will have all of the magical effects of the real thing. It is important to note that mental magic derives its power NOT from the target's inability to make his saving throws, but rather the illusionist's ability to channel his magic and manipulate the world around him through his target. Examples include *color spray*.

In any case, it is important to note that the illusionist is a magic user, and many of his spells are every bit as real as a wizard's *magic missile*.

ILLUSIONIST HEALING

C&C has taken a wholly unique approach to illusionary magic in making the illusion real. This is not because of the weakness of the target, nor because of his inability to discern the real from the unreal. It rests in the power of the illusionist. The more powerful the illusionist, the greater the impact his spells can have on the game. If the illusionist is an actual spellcaster capable of manipulating the world around him, then logic and the enterprising player eventually arrive at the healer's door.

In **C&C** illusionists can heal damage. They heal damage in the same manner in which they cause damage - not by tricking their targets but rather by projecting their own magical power into the target and changing the nature of time and substance. They do not trick the target's mind into psychically healing itself; that assumption assumes the target is mentally able to do such a thing. The power of the illusionist does not reside in the target but solely in the illusionist. Illusionists heal through their own magic, while a cleric channels the magic of a deity, serving as a bridge between the deity and the target to heal it. An illusionist channels or controls the natural magic of the world around him, using the target's own mind as a bridge between the magic and the target. The more powerful the illusionist, the greater his ability to cross that bridge.

NOTE: **C&C** is about risk and danger. Damage is a constant factor in the game, and it comes quickly and is often hard to heal, leaving characters in the lurch for quick healing. In some RPGs, the role of the cleric is usually that of a healer, a walking-medic who begs for donations from his protectors, the other players, in order to keep them in fighting trim. This walking-medic concept is not one **C&C** encourages. Every player at the table should drink deeply from the adventurer's cup, each sharing the risk of death. If the cleric is the only source of consistent healing for the party, then healing spells must take up a significant number of the cleric's spell slots. This does not allow the player to really exercise the power of his class. Allowing illusionists the capacity to heal through their projected power of sorcery relieves some of the cleric's healing burden in the party. And, of course, having healing illusionists invites the CK to provide more dangerous adventures where monsters deal even more damage.

The Healing Power of the Illusionist

To bring greater continuity to the table and to better express the illusionist's power as a manipulator of time and space in regard to his ability to heal, it may simply make more sense to have the illusionist make an attribute check to succeed at casting any curing spells. When an illusionist attempts to heal, the recipient, either unconscious or conscious, receives the magic only if the illusionist successfully makes his attribute check. In this case, the CL equals the level of the target.

Use this rule in place of the target making the check against the illusionist. This approach expresses the nature of the class better than when the target makes a save.

ILLUSIONIST SPELLS ON THE MINDLESS

The illusionist's power resides in the magic he conjures and his ability to project that magic into another's mind, which acts as a bridge. An illusionist cannot use his mental and hypnotic magic against targets possessing no minds whatsoever, such as zombies, as such targets cannot provide a bridge for the illusionist's projections. This does not make zombies immune to all the illusionist's spells, however. The CK must determine the spell's source, whether it is purely illusionary or not, to decide whether or not it can affect the zombie.

Illusions & the Unconscious Mind

Illusionists can affect the unconscious mind. The illusionist's skill allows him to project himself, through his spells, into the minds of the conscious or unconscious, where he channels his magic to alter time and space. To heal a target, the (conscious or unconscious) recipient of an illusionist's healing spell must *fail* an intelligence check in order for the healing to succeed.

Disbelieving Illusions

No mechanic exists in **Castles & Crusades** for disbelieving any spell. There would be no reason or justification for disbelieving anything, when anything is possible. To attempt such a thing invites disaster, as it weakens the targets' mental ability to deal with the reality of what is coming at them. **Castles & Crusades** allows for various attribute checks and saving throws when encountering magic or magical effects. If someone attempts to "disbelieve," then allow the player to make the saving throw he would normally make (this is not a second saving throw, just the normal saving throw), adding all the necessary bonuses or CL into the equation.

SPELL BEHAVIOR

What follows is a listing of spells requiring further explanation.

BANISHMENT: There are many objects which the caster can use to amplify the power of this spell, but the objects must

be particular to the target and known by him. For example: The Vontalot devils dwelling in Aihrde once were servants of Corthain, the god of law and good, but they were cast out and driven from his side. Now, they hate all things to do with Corthain, so displaying Corthain's holy symbol serves as a perfect focus component and causes the Vontalot to suffer a -2 on their saving throw against *banishment*. Using garlic during a *banishment* casting versus a vampire would have the same effect.

BLESS WATER: *Bless water* allows the spellcaster to transform a pint of normal water into holy water. Unless the spellcaster casts the spell inside a holy sanctum, one relevant to the caster, only the caster can use the holy water; it is ineffective in anyone else's hands, and if anyone else even touches the holy water or its container, it reverts to plain water. The sole exception to this rule is if the caster gives the holy water to someone possessing a similar alignment who is serving the caster's purposes, then the holy water may possibly retain its blessed properties. In this case, the caster must make a wisdom save with a CL equal to the level of the person attempting to use the holy water. If successful, the water retains its properties. However, if the caster creates the holy water inside a holy sanctum dedicated to his deity, then the water becomes permanently blessed and anyone can use it.

A caster can only possess a number of pints of holy water, created by the *bless water* spell, equal to his level.

CONTINUAL FLAME: Casters cannot cast *continual flame* continually. They can only keep a number of flames burning at any given time equal to their level.

FLOATING DISK: The caster cannot ride on the disk he is controlling. He must concentrate to maintain the disk, and he cannot cast other spells while controlling it.

LEVITATE: *Levitate* only allows for vertical movement. The caster can carry himself and all his belongings as if weightless. If casting on some other target, the caster cannot lift more than 100 pounds per level.

MAGIC STONES: These stones only last 1 minute per level of the caster. Stones crafted by a 9th-level druid last 9 minutes.

PHANTASMAL KILLER: The spell's range is the range the caster must be from the target when initially casting. The phantasmal killer materializes next to the target, attacking in the following round. The killer must attack the target normally, including making an initiative roll. The target of this spell cannot damage the phantasmal killer, even though he may believe his strikes are true. The phantasmal killer must successfully strike the target before the target is required to roll a saving throw. Once the killer has materialized, it pursues the target until it dissolves, which it does the round after it scores a successful strike or upon the spell's expiration, whichever occurs first.

SLEEP: *Sleep* does not affect elemental creatures.

SUMMONING MONSTERS: There is no easy way to establish tables for summoning monsters, as each of the spells are based upon the amount of hit dice summoned. But the below serve as quick reference tables that allow CKs and players to generate monster rapidly. In **Table 2.16** use different dice as noted for each type of spell, lesser hit dice, medium or greater.

TABLE 2.15 SUMMONING ANIMALS

Die Roll	1HD (roll1d6)	2HD (roll 1d8)	3HD (roll 1d4)
1	Ant, giant, worker	Ant, giant, soldier	Ape, giant
2	Baboon	Boar, wild	Bear, black
3	Dog	Frog, giant	Crocodile
4	Jackal	Herd animal	Spider, med
5	Rat, giant	Lynx, giant	
6	Spider, small	Pony	
7		Tick, giant	
8		Wolf	
	4HD (roll 1d6)	**5HD (roll 1d4)**	**6HD (roll 1d4)**
1-2	Bird of prey	Lion	Snake, constr
3-4	Lizard, giant	Spider, large	Bear, brown
5-6	Toad, giant		

TABLE 2.16 SUMMONING MONSTERS: LESSER, MEDIUM AND GREATER

Die Roll	1HD	2HD	3HD
	L 1d8	**L 1d5**	**L 1d6**
	M 1d10	**M 1d6**	**M 1d10**
	G 1d10	**G 1d8**	**G 1d10+1**
1	roll animal	roll animal	roll animal
2	Orc	Dryad	Bugbear
3	Goblin	Gnoll	Flesh crawler
4	Sprite	Troglodyte	Harpy
5	Stirge	Lizard folk	Nymph
6	Hobgoblin	Blink dog	Satyr
7	Jaculus	Pseudodragon	Were rat
8	Kobold	Boar, wild	Hippogriff
9	Imp		Tavis worm
10	Quasit		Arrowhawk
11			Dragon, wht hatchling
	4HD	**5HD**	**6HD**
	M 1d10	**M 1d10**	**M 1d8**
	G 1d12	**G 1d12**	**G 1d10**
1	Gibbering mouther	Ankheg	Medusa
2	Hell hound	Ettercap	Manticore
3	Shadow Mastiff	Rust Monster	Were tiger
4	Pegasus	Owl bear	Winter wolf
5	Ghost naga	Cockatrice	Basilisk
6	Were wolf	Hydra (5)	Arrowhawk
7	Unicorn	Were boar	Hydra (6)
8	Giant eagle	Gargoyle	Otyugh

9	Centaur	Salamander	Troll (river)
10	Worg	Phase spider	Dragon, sm, blu, grn, brz, brs
11	Ogre	Ogre magi	
12	Dragon, blk hatchling	Dragon, cop hatch Or wht fledg	
	7HD	**8HD**	**9HD**
	G 1d12	**G 1d8**	**G 1d12**
1	Drider	Hell hound	Achaierai
2	Treant	Gorgon	Behir
3	Hag, annis	Xorn	Bulette
4	Griffin	Sphynx, gyno	Chimera
5	Roper	Hydra (8)	Couatl
6	Remorhaz	Dragon, hatchling gld, slv, or red	Dragonne
7	Rakshasa	Dragon, fledgling blu, grn, brz, brs	Hydra (9)
8	Hydra (7)	Invisible stalker	Lamia
9	Were bear		Naga (dark or spirit)
10	Night mare		Sphynx, hieraco
11	Minotaur		Troll or Giant, hill
12	Wyvern		Hag, green

WISH: The *wish* spell serves as a fail-safe for characters in dire circumstances or for the wizard desiring to conjure epic levels of power. As such, *wish* is easy to abuse. CKs must adjudicate the *wish* very carefully, and they always have final say on how the *wish* is interpreted and how it works. Because of this, the *wish* often becomes a strange contest between the player trying to outwit the CK and the CK trying to curtail the spell's power. Neither CKs nor their players should overthink this spell. When characters attempt to use *wish* in a fashion that salvages a game from certain destruction, a loose interpretation of the requested *wish* is best; this allows for rapid play and does not send the game into a spiral of arguments. However, on those occasions where a player attempts to upset the balance of the game, the CK should apply a very strict interpretation of the *wish*.

BEYOND SIEGE

In fantasy fiction, using magic comes with a price. In other words, there are set rules and limits to the use of magic and its powers. If characters had limitless magical power, they would be omnipotent. In other instances, they perhaps have limitless power but a single damaging weakness which, in turn, makes them a superhero. In **Castles & Crusades**, the magical system is "Vancian."

Vancian magic refers to magic as conceived in the fantasy writings of author Jack Vance. In Vancian magic, magic wielders operate under the powers of a "fire and forget" system. They memorize their magic from a book, scroll or tome in much the same way a student crams for a calculus or algebra exam, forgetting everything the moment the "test" is over. In the case of magic, the rituals the caster studies, recites, prays for, he completes up to a certain point prior to the start of his day. Then, when the wielder is ready, he completes the spell or prayer with the last few uttered words of the ritual, and the magical effect takes place.

Castles & Crusades is an extremely versatile game which accommodates many methods of play with ease. The standard rules lean heavily upon the Vancian magic system for spellcasters; however, there are very different magic approaches with which players might wish to experiment. Games grow and evolve over time, after all, and experience provides a broad variety of gaming options. The following rules are optional and should not be considered official rules for spellcasting. CKs should study them carefully before permitting them in the game, and they should only use them if both they and the players fully agree on their usage.

Several alternative spellcasting systems exist. These are described below, as many find the Vancian magic system too limiting or not responsive enough to their highly charged magical environments. The logic behind using a different approach is that it seems improbable that one would entirely "forget" a spell or its casting method. Rather, one might run out of material components for casting a spell or even become too physically or mentally taxed to cast any more spells, but one would never forget the spell itself. Also, each spellcasting character has "spell slots" that limit the number of spells one can cast from at any given level. Again, it would seem illogical for one to forget how to cast a spell once learned, and the differences in level should not impact this.

NOTE: Before permanently implementing a new rule into your game, be sure to test the method for yourself to ensure it meets your game's role-playing needs. Consider also that implementing any of the systems below will inevitably strengthen the spellcasting classes, as they can choose whichever spell they want or that suits their needs at any given time.

MANA AND SPELLCASTING

In this spellcasting method, each class receives mana. Mana is the innate magical ability, spiritual strength, or willpower a person possesses. For clerics and druids, mana is a derivative of their wisdom and spiritual connection to the deities of their world. For wizards and illusionists, their spellcasting mana comes from their mental capacity to bend the world to their needs or desires.

All spellcasting classes automatically know four 0-level spells and two **1st level** spells.

In this method, all spellcasting classes must learn each individual spell before they can cast it. First, they must have access to the spell from a mentor, book, or scroll. Then, they must study the spell; though they can learn it, it takes time. Each spell requires one day per level of the spell to learn, plus a random roll of 1d10 or 1d20 days, depending on the caster's success or failure on an intelligence or wisdom check. Upon beginning study, the spellcaster rolls an intelligence or wisdom check with a CL equal to the spell's level. If the spellcaster fails the check, it takes 1d20 more days to learn the desired spell. If the caster succeeds, it takes only 1d10 more days to learn the spell.

Each class starts the game with mana points that increase as the character gains levels. Each class begins with 6 mana points. Wizards and illusionists add their intelligence modifier bonus to their mana points, and clerics and druids add their wisdom bonus to their beginning mana pool. As they gain levels, the spellcasters' mana points increase according to the following table. These numbers are not cumulative.

TABLE 2.17 MANA POINTS

Level	Mana	Level	Mana
1	6+attribute bonus	13	83+attribute bonus
2	7+attribute bonus	14	96+attribute bonus
3	9+attribute bonus	15	110+attribute bonus
4	11+attribute bonus	16	125+attribute bonus
5	15+attribute bonus	17	141+attribute bonus
6	20+attribute bonus	18	158+attribute bonus
7	26+attribute bonus	19	177+attribute bonus
8	33+attribute bonus	20	196+attribute bonus
9	41+attribute bonus	21	216+attribute bonus
10	50+attribute bonus	22	237+attribute bonus
11	60+attribute bonus	23	259+attribute bonus
12	71+attribute bonus	24	282+attribute bonus

Example: The **3rd level** wizard Tolvar the Red with an 18 intelligence would have a base of 9 mana points plus his attribute bonus of +3, for a total of 12 mana points to use in casting any known spells.

Each known spell costs mana to cast. The mana cost equals the spell's level +1. So, a 0 level spell costs 1 mana point to cast. A **5th level** spell costs 6 mana points to cast. The caster can cast any known spell at any time as long as he has the mana available to do so.

Spellcasters can learn and cast any spell one-half their level without a problem-time being the only cost. Should spellcasters attempt to learn or use a spell more than one-half their level, they must make a successful intelligence check (wizards or illusionist) or wisdom check (clerics or druids) to succeed. For purposes of figuring this out, always round up. The challenge level for the check is the spell's level. Failure on an attempt to learn a spell means the spellcaster cannot attempt to learn that particular spell again until he gains a new level. Failure to cast a spell causes a mana loss double what it cost to cast the spell. If the mana cost drives the spellcaster into the negatives, it delays his mana recovery.

Once mana is spent casting a spell, it recovers at an hourly rate equal to the caster's level; i.e., a **1st level** caster gains one mana point an hour, and a **2nd level** caster gains two mana an hour, and so on. Should a spellcaster be recovering from negative mana, that mana recovers at ¼ the normal rate of recovery, so a **4th level** caster with negative mana would regain 1 point per level per hour, and an **8th level** caster would regain mana at 2 points per level per hour, etc. To return to a normal rate of recovery, the spellcaster must reach his full mana.

Example: Should a **4th level** caster use 10 of his 11 mana points, he recovers it at a rate of 4 mana per hour. If that same caster tried to cast a **6th level** spell and failed, his recovery is at 1 an hour until fully recovered.

This method allows for characters to cast known spells at will (as long as they have the mana), but forces them to keep track of their mana points. This method of spellcasting changes the dynamic of play, but not in a significant manner. Preplanning spells no longer becomes necessary, but mana control does. In all, this method adds flavor to all styles of play, whether high fantasy or gritty fantasy, and opens up a whole slew of possibilities with regards to magic items.

SPELL SLOTS

One of the oldest forms of overcoming the seeming confines of the Vancian system has been the simple conversion of memorized spells per day into so-called open "Spell Slots." For example, as is detailed in the **Players Handbook**, a **3rd level** spellcaster gains four 0 level spells, three **1st level** spells, and one **2nd level** spell per day. Normally, casters select the spells they "think" they might need for the day. Unfortunately, the character has no idea what sort of things he might encounter during the course of the day. The character is stuck, if you will, with a limited number of options based on choices already made, and he must use these limited options in the face of the unknown! The horror!

In the spell-slot system, the character does not pre-memorize spells at the beginning of the day. Instead, he may use a given spell slot to cast any of his known spells of the appropriate spell-slot level on an as-needed basis, allowing him to spontaneously react to encounters the CK throws at him. In this free-flowing system, spell slots represent the caster's pool of magical energy based on his experience and personal power, which grows, of course, as he gains spellcaster levels.

Advanced Spell Slots

In keeping with the concept of spell slots, another alternative is to break down each spell into a number of "spell points," whereby a **3rd level** spell, for example, equals three spell points. Three **1st level** spells are worth three spell points, and so on. Using the existing text, you simply convert all the spells per day a caster may cast into a raw number of so-called "spell points" that may then be used as the caster sees fit.

In this method, the Castle Keeper might rule that casters may not cast any spells more powerful than the highest-level spell that they can "know," or the CK may rule that casters may cast spells beyond their character's normal level of ability, so long as they have access to the spell (in the case of wizards and illusionists). This is strongly cautioned against, however, as it may upset the game's balance. For some Castle Keepers, however, this unbalance may not be an issue. Truly, it all depends on how your campaign flows and how much you trust the players or how much they trust you. Remember, it's all about having fun and using your imagination to co-create a socially interactive game of high fantasy.

THE QUICK CHARGE

After the crackling electricity shot from his fingertips fried the charging ogres to a smoldering crisp.

Yesac rubbed his temples as the last of his magic drained from him.

"I'm spent," he sighed. "My wand is empty, and I just used the last of my own reserves."

"Great," growled Manslayer the dwarf. "I suppose now the wizard needs him an eight-hour nap before we can move on. I'll be up all night with no sleep o' me own while the enemy reinforces himself!"

"Not this time," Yesac replied, resignedly. "I have a ritual. It is frowned upon by the Keepers of our Lore in the Castle Golden. Dangerous indeed, so you shall have to guard me even more closely than usual."

"Here we go," growled Manslayer.

"This ritual," Yesac continued, "will grant me a full recharge of my magical energies without need of rest at this juncture, though it will dull my senses and drain my life force."

"Well get with the ritual, long shanks! We got loot to get and ale to swill!"

Yesac sighed again and "got with the ritual." Obviously, dwarves would never understand.

The magical Quick Charge may be used to shorten the time required for spellcasters to "re-learn" or "re-charge" their magical powers. The Quick Charge works on the principle that using magic expends energy and is an exhaustive process. The normal "per-day" uses of magic are the limit of the spiritual, physical, mental, and emotional energies spellcasters can wield before having to pay a usage penalty.

A Quick Charge allows the caster to sacrifice certain attributes in exchange for more raw magical power, with the understanding that the sacrifice may also affect the character beyond the day's sacrifice and that recovery from the sacrifice takes time.

Characters using a Quick Charge sacrifice one temporary point of constitution, one point of intelligence (in the case of a wizard or illusionist), or one point of wisdom (in the case of cleric or druid), and one point of charisma in exchange for one level of recovered spells. This sacrifice allows the recovery of all **1st level** spells immediately upon sacrifice. If using the standard Vancian system (the standard magic system in **C&C**), then recovered spells include only those already studied or memorized for that particular day; changing to new spells in this system would require a full rest.

Casters may sacrifice a number of points equal to the desired spell level of recovery for each of the attributes listed. So, a character wishing to also recover **2nd level** spells would need to sacrifice two points of constitution, two points of intelligence or wisdom, and two points of charisma; and characters wishing to regain their **3rd level** spells would sacrifice three points of these listed attributes, and so on. Of course, sacrificing enough points to recover a certain level of spells means all spell levels below the paid-for level are also recovered. For example, a wizard sacrificing three points to regain 3rd-level spells also recovers all **2nd** and **1st level** spells, but he weakens his attributes in return, and their reduction affects his ability to make related saving throws, as he loses bonuses and possibly gains temporary penalties in those attributes.

Spellcasters have a limit to the amount of sacrifice they may make in regard to their spellcasting attribute (intelligence or wisdom), and they are unable to sacrifice beyond their ability to cognitively or spiritually access their magic. They may not reduce their spellcasting attribute below 10 at any given time.

Spellcasters recover these attribute points at one point each per full day of rest. The attributes cannot be recovered magically through use of a *restoration* spell or any other restorative magic. Attributes enhanced with the e*nhance attribute* spell cannot be sacrificed. However, since the *enhance attribute* spell has a short duration, it may be used to temporarily allay the debilitating effects of sacrificed attributes.

Example: Yesac the Blue is a **5th level** wizard with an intelligence of 16, a constitution of 11, and charisma of 12; he has 15 hit points. Yesac is nearly out of spells. He has a *charm person* and a *web* spell left, and both will be useful, but what he could really use in the dungeon filled with shadows and wraiths is more *magic missile* spells. Yesac could channel his inner magic, creating a circuit of power to draw upon, and spend some of his magical currency to regain all of his spells up through his **3rd level** spells, but by doing so, he will be physically, mentally, and socially weakening himself of three points of constitution, charisma, and intelligence. Dropping the three points of intelligence costs Yesac his high-intelligence bonus to spells of **1st** and **2nd level**. It also costs him five hit points when his constitution falls to 8. All of his saves adjust downward until he rests long enough to return his attributes to their normal levels.

PULP SORCERY

Pulp sorcery refers to the style of magic and sorcery described in the pulp fiction era of the early 20th century. In these yarns, as produced in the pulp magazines of the 1920s and 1930s, magic was rare, wondrous, and often horrifying to wield, and it was certainly quite dangerous to learn.

Spellcasting was not necessarily limited to wizards, sorcerers, and high priests, but it was certainly more difficult for non-casters to use. Typically, these incantations were performed by directly reading from a magical grimoire or decaying scroll. For literary reasons, allowing a non-caster to incorporate occasional scroll use performs the function of introducing a character to the power of magic for good or ill. For game purposes, a situation may arise where the spellcasters are otherwise indisposed or impaired in their casting ability and the only way to save them and move the game along is to allow a non-caster the ability to use a scroll to save a life or to overcome an encounter.

True wielders of pulp-style sorcery often recharge their energies with the use of powerful herbs and reagents that are as maddening as they are deadly. Others wield powerful runes or focus their energies through precious gemstones to enhance their magic.

The following optional pulp-inspired alternatives to the standard magical system can enhance the flavor of your **C&Cs** game. Castle Keepers are free to use these examples as a guideline for adding their own style of pulp fantasy to their campaigns and should not feel limited or bound by the examples detailed here.

Another aspect of pulp sorcery is that spellcasting is complicated and draining. Sorcerers make pacts with otherworldly powers who grant them magical energies in exchange for unspeakable sacrifice. A common thread in pulp sorcery is that the sorcerer requires rare components to work his magic, and the use of these components is absolutely necessary to recharge his magic.

NON-CASTER SCROLL USE

Casting from a scroll is available to all literate characters with a successful intelligence attribute check for arcane magic or a successful wisdom attribute check for divine magic as used by druids and clerics. For non-casters, the use of scrolls or reading from a wizard's tome is extremely difficult though not impossible, having a base challenge level of 5+1 per spell level attempted.

Success: On a successful read, the scroll works, though the challenge level of saves vs. the spell's effect are reduced to the minimum caster level required to cast the spell. For example, a non-caster who succeeds in reading a *fireball* scroll may only cast a **5th level** fireball.

Failure: Failure to successfully read the scroll could (and should) have disastrous results. Consult the following table for possible results.

TABLE 2.18 NON-CASTER SCROLL FAILURE

Roll 1d8	
1	**Opposite Effect:** Combat spells strike the caster rather than the intended target (example, *fireball* detonates on caster). If using a summoning spell, the caster is teleported to the summoned creature's lair and must face it alone! Utility spells like *fly* or *shield* affect enemies instead of desired targets.
2	**Random Effect:** Spell randomly replicates the abilities and effects of a spell of equal level.
3	**Spell Weakened:** Spell is half its normal power or duration. **Example:** a *lightning bolt* would normally deal 5d6 points of damage; it instead deals 2d6.
4	**Spell Strengthened:** Spell is twice as powerful as normal, or it has double the standard duration.
5	**Illusion:** Spell apparently works, but it is an illusion. In the case of an illusion, the effects are all too real!
6-8	**Fizzle:** Spell has no effect whatsoever. The reading simply fails. This should be the most common result.

BUT I'M A STINGY CASTLE KEEPER

Understand that in exclusive Vancian magic systems, the design intent of game developers was that spellcasters need not completely rely on their own spellcasting to survive an adventure and be an important member of the adventuring party with a valued task. It was perhaps the unwritten rule of the day that a goodly supply of potions, magical scrolls, wands, staves, and wondrous magical items specific to the casting classes would be regularly included in awarded loot.

Sometimes Castle Keepers forget this assumption in the course of creating their adventures. Possibly they generate treasure randomly from **Monsters & Treasure** or **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde**, and for whatever reason, loot useful to clerics, wizards, illusionists, and druids just doesn't come up. In this instance, the Castle Keeper needs to remember the players. If the campaign is comprised of a traditional fighter, rogue, wizard, and cleric, there should be an equal amount of useful magical items (of appropriate power) available for each of these characters.

A *wand of charm person* and a *wand of magic missiles* in the hands of a mid-level wizard give the wizard an option of doing something in nearly every encounter. A *wand of cure light wounds* and a *wand of sound burst* likewise free up the cleric to use his other divine gifts as daily spells, freeing him from the role of being the party's medic. At lower levels, scrolls piled with those sorts of extra spells give the characters more options per encounter to still use their magic and "be magical" without having to own up to a spell per round to feel as if they are keeping up with the rest of the party.

Remember that care should be taken to avoid overloading the campaign with magic. Most Castle Keepers find that their first campaign drowns in magic and falls apart due to an overabundance of magical gear and "caster favoritism."

Perhaps the campaign is a campaign that is relatively "low magic" in terms of magic items and gear, and for this reason, scrolls, wands, staves, and potions are simply very difficult to come across. In this case, magic swords, armor, and other wondrous items are rare, as well. The magic wielders are the vessels of almost all magic, and are thus powerful for that reason alone. In such campaigns, they need to rely on their own magical reserves and a more economical use of their powers and abilities. Whatever the case, as the Castle Keeper, make sure you establish the tone for your campaign early and stick with it. If you are going to be stingy with magical treasure and make the casters rely on their own spells, then plan encounters and adventures appropriately. Alternately, consider any of the magical alternatives listed in this section as options for getting the most out of the gaming experience you share with your players.

CHAPTER 3 – EXPANDING EQUIPMENT

Equipment is a vital aspect of any role-playing game. It has immeasurable purposes beyond its obvious usage in the mechanics of game play. For players, equipment helps establish what type of character they wish to create. Skilled players use equipment to project the image they wish to have of their character, using it to reflect their character's personality and role in the adventure and party. For Castle Keepers, equipment has many usages. By establishing the availability of equipment, CKs construct the setting and its environment within which the adventure takes place. The skilled CK uses equipment wastage, its replacement, and its cost as a method to control the adventure. Equipment is not a fixed variable like attributes or even hit points, and treating it as such misuses its potential.

Equipment is one of the most vibrant aspects of **Castles & Crusades**, and it is the least used and understood aspect of the role-playing experience.

ROLE-PLAYING EQUIPMENT

There is probably no better way to consistently convey the image of a player character than through his equipment. Players always pay attention to equipment; it's the one constant they understand, and it's one of the few aspects of the game they control. This empowers players, giving them developmental freedom, something the Castle Keeper normally controls. This is very important to note for beginning or experienced CKs. Players do not possess much in the area of game control, and equipment is one of the areas they almost completely control - assuming the CK is not too restrictive in equipment acquisition. Understanding this creates a far more enjoyable experience for gamers on both sides of the gaming screen.

There are a few tools, all very powerful, at the players' disposal that allow them to make an impact on the game. For players, how a character looks, meaning what gear he carries, represents how they want to play their characters. This begins with the class-specific gear such as armor, weapons, spellbook, tools, etc. Choosing the proper equipment is the first and best place to start in character development. By choosing equipment, players create an image of their characters, which immediately imprints itself upon the game, no matter the Castle Keeper's designs. A rogue with a crossbow and garrote is different from one with a rapier and long dirk. Once the player's character dons the Lion's Tabard, he is marked as uncommon, and that sets the stage for what type of character he is portraying and probably the character's class, as well. The CK, knowingly or unknowingly, adjusts the game accordingly.

Further, equipment is one of the true variables in the game that players have tremendous control over. They can buy what they can afford. Dice do not dictate the outcome of what the character may buy. Players roll hit points and attributes and even spells for wizards and illusionists, but they *choose* their equipment. Also, a character's equipment constantly changes. The **1st-level** fighter who began his career in leather armor with a short sword and dagger quickly evolves into a **3rd-level** fighter possessing scale mail, a battle-axe, and a long spear.

Choosing equipment goes far beyond war gear, though. What characters wear and how they carry their excess gear, such as food, tools, and rope (whether in packs, or sacks, cart, or sled), can all set a tone for both the character and the game. Simple approaches to character equipment can really go far and aid in the enjoyment of everyone at the table. The character who takes a large backpack and fills it with all manner of gear from string, fishing line, bandages, soap, and rope, extra clothes, pots, and pans sets himself apart from a character who carries a small knapsack and lives off the land. So, used in this way, a player can portray his character's personality through the chosen equipment and how it is worn or carried.

Example 1: Having only recently slain several ogres, Merrick and his comrades have gathered a heap of treasure. After the cut, Merrick's share comes to several hundreds worth of gold and gems. Upon arriving in town, Merrick purchases a new set of crimson-colored chain mail armor, a bright red shield, and a small red-lacquered

helm. He makes certain the helm has nasal and cheek guards on it. He pays the extra gold coin for a long plume of horse hair. His shield is iron, and he emblazons it with his deity's holy symbol and his family's coat of arms. He purchases a burgundy surcoat with similar family symbols upon it. He replaces his battle axe with a long sword and mace, and his knife with a well-worked ivory-handled dagger. Once adequately armed, he chooses a stout but small backpack, with only enough room for his hard tack rations, a tinder box, a whetstone, and some bandages. He purchases a thin rope and neatly coils it up, attaching it to the outside of his backpack. He bundles his sparse bedroll up into a tight roll and straps it to the top of his pack. He hangs one of his two new water flasks on his pack, and he slings the other over his head and shoulder, behind his back. Satisfied with his new gear, he sets off to the inn to store it until the next adventure.

Example 2: Publio, rescued by Merrick and his comrades, is an elf. He is short for his people, but spry and able. He is an accomplished rogue, and he makes his way in the world by acquiring what he needs along the way, as he needs it. When the party arrives in town, Publio takes his share of the treasure and heads to the market to get some bare supplies. He first purchases two new large sacks, testing them for strength. He then ties them together and slings them over his shoulder. He proceeds to buy a variety of equipment: loose foodstuffs for rations, water flasks, bundles of rope, a grapple, tinderbox, several torches, and so on. Each item he buys, he weighs in his hand and tosses it in one of the sacks, making sure to keep a good balance between the two bags. As soon as he's content with his haul, he shoulders the sacks and proceeds to buy himself a baggy shirt and wide cloak, which complement his long trousers and low, soft boots. The cloak, too large for his slender frame, drags the ground, and is soon dirty and trailing threads. Publio cares little for this, as the cloak is a ruse designed to fool watchful eyes as he plies his trade in a town that promises a healthy harvest.

In both these examples, we learn a great deal about the characters. Merrick is probably a paladin or knight, a fastidious and organized character type. He is someone of station and wants people to see him as such. Publio is less concerned about his appearance or gear, and is a little more carefree than his employer. Equipment sets the stage for both characters, creating indelible images from which the players and the CK can build further adventures and encounters.

ROOM & BOARD

Every character enters an inn or tavern at some point during game play, and every player asks the CK the cost of a night's stay and the cost of a warm meal and a cool drink. Indeed, the tavern scene is one of the hallmarks of role-playing games. Tavern scenes are fun in that they allow the CK the perfect opportunity to guide the game forward, or to tie in new or even old plot devices. Characters can engage in all manner of activity at the tavern, from spending their hard-earned loot, picking up rumors, to picking a traveler's pockets. The tavern is the cornerstone of the adventuring platform.

In order to bring some structure to the tavern scene, it's necessary for the CK to have some idea of the cost of room and board. The tables below supply a baseline for those services and the cost of other sundry items the CK or players might find useful. Castle Keepers should adjust prices per locale. The better quality establishments should charge 10-20% more, rundown, back-alley places should charge a little less.

RATIONS

Normal rations as listed in the **Players Handbook** generally consist of hard crackers with cheese placed in block form, all wrapped in wax paper. Such rations are difficult to chew, but are very hearty and filling. Better foods are available, but they cost more money.

TABLE 3.1 RATIONS

Type	Cost/day	Weight	Includes
Standard	5sp	1 lbs.	Dried crackers and cheese
Good	1gp	10 lbs.	Wheat cake with raisins, olives, and onions
High	10gp	10 lbs.	Mixture of dried meat and dried fruits in season

No matter the rations' quality, they withstand weather and time very well, staying moist and flavorful for many months.

Note: Wise Castle Keepers will buy some thick crackers before a game and make his players eat only the crackers for the entire game, drinking them down with a single glass of water (no refills!). After doing this once, the players will think harder about the food they buy for their characters.

MEALS, LODGING & PROVISIONS

All taverns brew a variety of beer and ale, and each has its own peculiar taste. Generally, the brew-masters brew a fresh batch every few days. The brew stays at room temperature and is relatively cheap. However, each tavern has a few specialty brews peculiar to that establishment.

TABLE 3.2 MEALS

Type	Cost
Light Meal (fish, breads, fruit, cheese)	1sp
Heavy Meal (meats, vegetable, breads, butter)	3sp
Extravagant (meats, puddings, cold fruits)	1gp
Beers:	
Pale Ale	2cp
Dark Ale	5cp
Lager	1sp
Wine (most of this is Brindisium Wine, see Aihrde)	
Red/White	5sp (5gp for a bottle)
Kathy's White (local, Caphryna)	1gp

Standard Room Costs

Purchased rooms usually come with bread and beer for morning's repast. The Common rooms are always crowded, usually smell, have no water, and usually possess one window or vent. The average room is empty. A room with just a bed has a frame, straw mattress, small table, and water. A furnished room has a bed, down mattress, blankets, table, water, chest, or desk.

TABLE 3.3 LODGING

Type	1 Person	2 Person	Double Occupancy
Common (Floor with Straw)	5cp*	—	—
Bare Floor (Average)	5sp	10sp	+10sp per person
Bed Only	8sp	15sp	+15sp per person
Furnished	1gp	2gp	+2gp per person

*Per Person

Double Occupancy: Average rooms, rooms with beds, and furnished rooms can comfortably accommodate one or two persons at the prices listed. In an emergency, each room can handle a maximum of twice the listed capacity with a corresponding loss of comfort. A room with a capacity of one person can handle up to two persons, while a room with a capacity of two people can handle up to four people. For every person beyond the capacity of the room, the cost of the room increases by the amount given in the Double Occupancy column of the table. For example, two people staying in a one person furnished room would increase the room's cost to 3gp: 1gp for the room itself, with a double occupancy cost of 2gp for the second person. If four people were staying in a two person furnished room, the cost of the room would be 6gp: 2gp for the room, plus double occupancy costs of 2gp each for the third and fourth persons.

Apartment/Flat

Prices can vary, depending on where the flat is or its general condition. The more rundown it is, the cheaper it is. The price depends on the district and the location within that district, but generally a small one-room flat costs about 1-3gp a month. Of course, this comes with no food, furniture, water, or even a water bucket. Better furnished flats come with greater prices. The CK should determine the type of room desired and the neighborhood within which it resides when determining the price for the player characters. For instance, if the party rented a flat in Nochi, a rougher part of town, it might only cost them 1gp a month. A flat on Fleetwood in Ra-veen could cost about 4gp a month. If they rented a furnished flat near the University in Caphryna, it could cost as much as 15gp a month. The CK is the final judge.

Tabard/Pilgrim's Rest

This is a hostel used primarily by religious seekers on a pilgrimage, but it can refer to any sleeping space given away to those who need it, but only if the owner decides to do so, usually at the request of a special service or favor in return, the most common request being the pilgrim say a prayer and place some token at the altar. The quarter is given only to those of a like mind, ability, or persuasion. For example, an aged warrior might give a young fighter a bed for the week in exchange for helping at the forge, but he would not offer the same to a wizard or rogue. Abuse of the privilege, such as repeated requests for free stays with no offer to pay or help, results in that character having a difficult time in the settlement, as word spreads of his misconduct and ungratefulness.

TABLE 3.4 PROVISIONS

Item	Cost	Weight	EV
Chocolate, 1 pound	10 gp	1 lb	—
Corral, 1 wagon (per night)	3 sp	—	—
Dried Fruit, 1 pound	1 sp – 5 gp	1 lb	1
Flour, Bag, 1 pound	4 sp	1 lb	1
Garum (2 oz. per jar)	1 gp	.5 lb	.25
Honey, Jar, 4 ounces	1 gp	.25 lb	.25
Jerky, ½ pound	6 sp	.5 lb	—
Kenneling, 1 animal (per night)	1 sp	—	—
Malmsey (per bottle)	1-20 gp	1 lb	1
Pottage (per bowl)	1 cp	.25 lb	—
Roasted Nuts, 1 pound	3 cp	1 lb	—
Salt, Bag, 1 pound	4 gp	1 lb	1
Stabling, 1 horse (per night)	1 sp	—	—
Sugar, Bag, 1 Pound	30 gp	1 lb	1

Chocolate: used for many different reasons, ranging as dramatically as being the basis for currency (in bean form) to a reserved beverage for nobility, chocolate is an extremely versatile substance. Among its traits are an incredible shelf life, being able to withstand deterioration by natural conditions for over a year (assuming no dramatic change in weather, that is), and its ability to instill energy in those consuming it; it also, according to legend, has various medicinal uses. Many animals, such as dogs, are either allergic to chocolate or find that it becomes a lethal toxin if eaten. Like sugar for drinks, chocolate can be used to hide an unpleasant taste, and for this reason, is occasionally used to mask poisons.

Corral: the storage, maintenance, care, and protection of a wagon in a secured building specifically designed to house them, with guards and the like. However, not all corrals are legitimate, and some hire unscrupulous people, and so the eternal caveat emptor must always be in mind when using such a service.

Dried Fruit: various types of fruits, such as grapes, apples, pears, and so forth, which have been drained of their water and juices to preserve them for extended periods. The more exotic the fruit, the greater the price. Grapes, for example, are often three to ten times more costly than an apple.

Flour, Bag: there are different types of flour, such as that made of wheat or ground almond, but the most common type (made of cereal grains, roots, or seeds) is the type specified here, which is used, primarily, for the making of baked goods like bread. It is, generally, a white powdery mixture, and can be used to treat a floor to detect the passage of an invisible being, or even thrown into the air in hopes of outlining said being in the substance, effectively acting as a non-magical *faerie fire* spell. Another use of a bag of flour is, quite simply, its weight; flour is always stored in bags capable of holding exactly one (1) pound.

Garum: a fermented fish sauce generally used to pickle (preserve) meats or vegetables, imbuing them with additional nutritional value, but it is also eaten on its own or added to a meal like a condiment. Many sailors and shoreline countries make ample use of garum. The cost of garum is high because the process to extract the components to make it is complex and lengthy.

Honey, Jar: honey is a naturally sweet consumable made by bees. It has many unusual properties, including an enduring durability (if sealed in a jar, honey can remain edible almost indefinitely), the ability to act as a repellent for infection and other medicinal effects (treatment for burns, stomach ailments, and lethargy, for example), and it acts as a strong preservative. In some cultures, honey is used as an embalming component, and so mummies and similar undead may radiate its scent.

Jerky: a meat product (usually beef or a poultry like turkey) which has been trimmed of excess fat, cut into thin strips, and seasoned (either in a marinade, brine, or with a dry rub of spices) and dried or smoked until cooked, allowing it to be stored without need for refrigeration for extended periods of time. It is a common component of a military ration, but the process is very involved and so may not be readily available.

Kenneling: housing, care, feeding, grooming, and protection for one night for a small animal, typically a dog.

Malmsey: a very sweet, thick wine made of grapes and flower petals with a robust color and powerful aroma; it is generally considered the drink of the common class. It is inexpensive to make, and is strong in the gullet. The variance in cost represents the exotic types and methods of its making, as some malmsey has its start at the feet of a princess (and is only allowed to be drunk by those of royal blood). Dwarves and those of a drinking nature (such as many fey) find malmsey to be undrinkable, calling it the derogatory term "Sweetwater."

Pottage: a stew made of meat, fish, and grains of various sorts; much like gruel, pottage is a peasant food. It's cheaply made and always available, though it never is made the same way twice.

Roasted Nuts: various types of shelled and unshelled nuts, which are placed over a fire, sometimes with a seasoning, and cooked until dry to preserve them and enhance their flavor. Depending on the type of nut, price can vary. This, along with dried fruit, is the basic component of many a ration.

Salt, Bag: there are two main types of salt, fine and coarse, both of which can be flavored or considered to be sea salt (extracted from evaporating oceanic water), depending on their source, but the one thing any salt shares is what is important about it – its legendary powers, of course. Not only is salt used for preserving and enhancing flavors, but it is supposedly an anathema to fiends and vampires, the latter being rumored to have to count each grain if spilled in front of them before being able to perform any other action. Beyond this, salt is said to drive out possession and to protect one from unwanted charm; if leather is pressed into salt and used on a weapon, notably a whip, it is supposed to have the power to harm the being, even when non-magical, and salt has countless uses in alchemy; indeed, salt is one of the most critical reagents. As with all things, the Castle Keeper must decide if any of these alleged abilities exist or are merely the pitch of a charlatan. Salt is listed as expensive, for although relatively mundane to modern sensibilities, historically salt was a highly sought commodity.

Stabling: the care, feeding (and watering), grooming, and housing for a large animal, especially a horse, cow, or ox. The better establishments have one stall for each animal, but several will simply place the animals together. These are ordinarily attached (not literally, necessarily) to a tavern, and many of the finer places will stable gratis.

Sugar, Bag: a sweet extraction from sugarcane, sugar is a granulated white or brown powder that has many uses: sweetening drinks when stirred into a liquid; if thrown onto a fire, it ignites and burns hot, allowing a fire to be started or continue burning; cooked into food as a flavoring or preservative; aiding the natural defenses of a plant when toiled into soil with the plant (used by apothecaries and herbalists to maintain their most prized examples); to trace the movements of something unseen; and a cleaning agent. Naturally, there are many other uses, but these examples should prove sufficient. Like with salt, the high price of sugar reflects its status as a luxury item, usually only affordable to the wealthy, and it reflects the difficulty inherent in acquiring it.

CARRYING CAPACITIES

Characters always need to carry materials from one location to another, such as loot from dungeons, items from the battlefield, and mounds of supplies to keep them alive on the long, hard, adventurers' road. As such, players will ask how much a standard backpack can carry or what a trunk will hold, etc. The tables below provide some suggested carrying capacities for various items, animals, and wagons. The weight column indicates how much gross weight each can hold, and the gold column indicates the average allowable amount of coins each can carry, specifically gold. This average can vary greatly as the size of coins differs.

TABLE 3.5 CARRYING CAPACITIES OF ITEMS

Equipment	Weight	Gold	EV
Standard Backpack	40 lbs.	640	2
Large Backpack	80 lbs.	1280	4
Small Basket	40 lbs.	640	2
Large Basket	80 lbs.	1280	4
Belt Pouch	20 lbs.	320	1
Small Sack	40 lbs.	640	2
Large Sack	120 lbs.	1920	4
Small Barrel	100 lbs.	1600	6
Large Barrel	300 lbs.	4800	9
Coffer/Casket	30 lbs.	480	6
Kettle	20 lbs.	320	2
Small Chest	60 lbs.	960	4
Medium Chest	150 lbs.	2400	8
Large Chest	300 lbs.	4800	12
Small Urn	40 lbs.	640	2
Medium Urn	100 lbs.	1600	4
Large Urn	1,000 lbs.	16,000	6
Shoulder Bag	30 lbs.	480	3
Saddle Bags	80 lbs.	1280	3
Scroll Tube	15 lbs.	240	1

TABLE 3.6 CARRYING CAPACITIES OF DRAFT ANIMALS

Animal*	Weight**	Gold
Burro	150 lbs.	2,400
Camel	360 lbs.	5,760
Dog	25 lbs.	400
Donkey	75 lbs.	1,200
Elephant	1200 lbs.	19,200
Horse, Draft	480 lbs.	7,680
Horse, Riding	240 lbs.	3,840
Llama	120 lbs.	1,920
Mule	320 lbs.	5,120
Pony	80 lbs.	300
Oxen	2000 lbs.	32,000

*Average mature, adult male; the camel, in which the females tend to be larger, is the exception.

** This references the average weight the animal in question can carry. Generally, it is based upon a percentage of the animal's body weight.

TABLE 3.7 WAGONS

Wagon Type	Weight	Cost in Gold	EV	Cargo	Speed
Buckboard	1000 lbs	100+	8	15 - 25	20 miles
Buggy	300-500 lbs	300+	16-30	10 - 30	10-30 miles
Buggy, Stanhope	1,000 lbs	500+	40 - 60	30 - 60	20-40 miles
Cab, Hackney (Growler)	200 -500 lbs	150	20-40	10 -30	10-20 miles
Cab, Hackney (Hansom)	100-500 lbs	100	10-30	10-20	15-25 miles
Carriage	600-1500 lbs	1,500+	35	20-40	10-30 miles
Carson Wagon	1,000-2,000 lbs	750	40	70-100	10-30 miles
Cart, Light	350-600 lbs	15	20	30	5-20 miles
Cart, Heavy	750-1,500 lbs	150	30	50	5-20 miles
Chariot	150-500 lbs	100	15	15-20	20-50 miles
Coach	1,000-2,000 lbs	200+	50	50-100	10-30 miles
Conestoga Wagon	4,000-8,000 lbs	2,500+	60-100	200-600	10-20 miles
Handcart (Wheelbarrow)	100-300 lbs	5	10	15	Special
Portable Throne (Sedia Gestatoria)	200-500 lbs	5,000+	30	10	Special
Rickshaw	200-500 lbs	75	15	5	10 miles
Sled	30-120 lbs	3-15	4-10	5-20	20-50 miles
Sleigh	450-1,200 lbs	50+	15	15-40	20-60 miles
Stagecoach	2,000-4,500 lbs	500+	40-80	30-80	30-60 miles
Wagon, Heavy, Covered	1,500-2,500 lbs	2,000	40	50-100	20-40 miles
Wagon, Light, Covered	500-1,000 lbs	1,000	25	20-40	20-40 miles

EV the encumbrance value if one attempts to bear the burden; it is easier to tug or roll the wagon, if so, reduce the encumbrance by half.

Cargo is the amount of space, measured in terms of encumbrance points, which may be stored within; an average, man-sized individual should roughly equate to 10 EV, not counting the gear he may be carrying; a small person has an EV of 5, and large person has an EV of 15. The listed value does not account for the required driver and the minimum supplies needed to operate it, such as a whip, hitch, and the like.

Speed measures the overland rate of movement on perfect terrain conditions in the course of 6-8 hours. Reductions for terrain conditions apply.

Buckboard: a four-wheeled vehicle that is relatively low to the ground with distinct board across the front that both allows the driver to rest his feet and keep the horse from bucking and striking the driver. Buckboards range from the simple transport, working vehicle, to more elaborate passenger vehhicles. They can carry a driver, a passenger, and a light load in the rear. Buckboards are made of hardwood reinforced with iron or steel.

Buggy: there are several varieties of buggies, ranging from a simple single-seat, two-wheel to the more extravagant four-wheel, two-seat convertible. Regardless of the specific model, they always have large wooden wheels and are horse-drawn, usually by one horse, but potentially up to four. The larger buggies are more expensive, heavy and have smaller cargo space, as they are intended more as showpieces (highly embossed and decorated with fancy etchings and woodwork) than working vehicles. They are ponderous but surprisingly agile. Their wheelbase is tall, allowing the buggy to avoid objects that would directly hinder its progress; because of this height, most individuals require assistance boarding the buggy.

Buggy, Stanhope: a completely enclosed buggy (accessible via a single door on the left) which is shorter in stature than others of its ilk, a Stanhope buggy is often dressed in armored slats or heavy bars, and is used for the transport of important individuals or valuable goods; it is, in some ways, much like a stagecoach, except the driver is within the Stanhope, separated by a special compartment just large enough to squeeze into. Stanhopes also do not typically have the necessary space required to accommodate additional protectors that a stagecoach possesses. They are made of hardwood treated to resist fire, and they are heavily fitted with metal, causing the Stanhope to be bulky and difficult to maneuver without bestial aid.

Cab, Hackney (Growler): using a specific breed of horse (called a Hackney, naturally), this is a four-wheeled, open-top carriage designed to travel over cobblestone roads and pathways, and is often used within a city as a sort of hired transport; the listed price is for manufacturing of the cab, so characters wishing to rent it can do so for 3-6 silver pieces per one-way trip. The driver usually sits at the forefront, near the hitched horse(s). The horses are usually decorated with elaborate insignia and designs to advertise the service or owner, and, therefore, can be easily identified if stolen.

Cab, Hackney (Hansom): the same Hackney horse is also the power behind a hansom, but the design is different; a hansom is a two-wheeled vehicle, and the driver sits behind the cabin, having to extend a whip or tool over the cabin to drive the vehicle. The cabin itself is often designed to hold only one or two individuals and not much else. The vehicle is otherwise similar to a growler in other respects.

Carriage: an elaborately decorated wooden, horse-drawn vehicle usually made of expensive materials and laced with gems and precious metals, a carriage is typically used as more of a display of wealth than for practical transport. Still, carriages are sturdy and capable of holding considerable weight. There are large windows in the cab so passengers can see and be seen. The above statistics are for the typical carriage, designed to carry nobles (specifically, a single person, such as a princess), but there are a variety which are meant for carrying luggage, and these would be lighter and have more cargo room, though they still retain the opulent elegance of their larger brethren.

Carson Wagon: composed of a hardwood floor and softwood enclosure, the deign of a Carson wagon is more of a mobile home than a simple cart or wagon, as they are intended to be lived in for long travels. They are often heavily reinforced and waterproofed with layers of woven leather, which when coupled with high wheels (usually four, but sometimes six), makes fording rivers simpler. These massive vehicles are usually drawn by a team of oxen, with mules attached to the rear.

Cart, Light: a flatbed wooden platform, often with wooden slats rising to form support walls, this two-wheeled vehicle is intended to carry loads much heavier than itself. They are often hitched to another vehicle, yoked to an ox or mule, or even hand-drawn. The cart's wide wheelbase allows smooth travel over open terrain, but travelling over rocky, broken terrain causes problems. A cart is not agile nor fast. Carts are the most common type of transport one would expect to find.

Cart, Heavy: essentially the same as the smaller light cart, the heavy cart adds metallic reinforcement to the sidewall, wheels, and choke. They are harder to draw by hand because they weigh more, but the addition of two wheels makes them roll easier. These also tend to come equipped with a braking cable.

Chariot: a mobile platform intended to provide a means for the occupants to stand relatively still during transit, the chariot serves two distinct roles: vehicle of war and vehicle of state. In either capacity, the basic structure remains the same: it has a hardwood floor, a high-rising wall in front of the driver which curves in a semicircle, and two thick wheels which give it momentum when drawn by fast-moving horses. In the role as war-wagon, the chariot is normally undecorated and rather plain, and they normally house a cache of arrows or javelins. They are often outrageously decorated, gilded, or made of exotic materials, etc., and can be extraordinarily expensive.

Coach: similar to a carriage, a coach is larger and carries up to six individuals, but they are usually used to move royal treasures, rather than people. Many people also associate extreme designs with coaches, like a pumpkin-shaped wheeled vehicle.

Conestoga Wagon: a large ship-shaped canvas-covered wagon made of heavy wood, the floor of which curves upward to the front and is caulked with tar to prevent leakage when crossing rivers. A team of horses (eight, each a specialized breed of draft horse) or oxen (a team of 12) draws the wagon. This massive land vehicle can carry an enormous amount of freight or passengers. Due to its load-bearing responsibilities, it nearly always carries additional wheels and axles, as these tend to break often. Many times, the vehicle is rented for 1sp per 100 miles.

Handcart: usually made of pine, handcarts are two-wheeled carts moved by hand. They are used to carry loads of groceries, market goods, and the like. Inexpensive to produce, they are quite common, but they do not travel well on terrain other than roads or plains; their speed is based on the individual using it.

Portable Throne (Sedia Gestatoria): exquisitely detailed and decorated, a portable throne is a royal chair which is carried on the shoulders of others; it cannot move on its own, as it has no wheels. These plush, rich, expensive, symbols of power are often used by kings or the highest figures in a religious hierarchy.

Sled: a flat platform, sometimes with an elevated metal railing, a sled is essentially just planks of wood raised over skis used to travel across ice, mud, or sand. A team of highly-trained dogs (ranging between four and 20, depending on weight pulled and distance traveled) pulls them, but people, camels, or other relatively small animals (such as ponies) can also pull them.

Sleigh: similar to a sled, a sleigh is a much larger, more enclosed, flatbed vehicle drawn by horses or reindeer; they are sometimes decorated in various artistic designs, but they primarily serve to deliver bulky goods which would not fit onto a sled.

Stagecoach: designed similarly to a growler, except that the cab is extended, allowing for two people to act as drivers (indeed it is sometimes necessary as the amount of horses needed, ranging from 4-10, makes control difficult for a single teamster). The stagecoach's rear wheels are higher than the front ones. They can travel on snow or heavy water, and, therefore, must often be converted to float (a simple process of removing the enclosure and towing it in the cargo bay) if forward progress is desired. The hold can stow a large amount of weight or people, and stagecoaches are used to move large quantities of money, making them prime targets for theft. Fortunately, a stagecoach, because it is powered by independent teams of horses, is agile and fast and can flee such attacks. Normally, a person rents a stagecoach for traveling in comfort, from 1 silver piece to 1 gold.

Wagon, Heavy, Covered: similar to the Conestoga wagon, a heavy covered wagon is, essentially, a very large cart inlaid with leather and tar to secure any gaps in the wooden floor and whose cargo is protected from above with a thick sail-like canvas. The major difference is that the wagon is box-shaped, weighs far less, and stows much less cargo, making it cheaper to own.

Wagon, Light, Covered: this is a smaller, lighter, version of a heavy covered wagon, but in all other respects is identical.

Wheelbarrow: having two handholds leading backward from the containment area, a wheelbarrow is a hand-powered vehicle. It has one, or two, wheels and two triangular stands to give it balance when not being operated. The cargo bay is generally dipped or curved, or flat; it is not intended to hold much weight. It has a maximum speed of the individual moving it.

TABLE 3.8 CARRYING CAPACITIES OF BOATS, SHIPS, ETC.

Vessel Type	Construction	Crew	Weaponry	Cargo	Speed	Cost
Barge	1-6	5-15	Personal or Light	30-60	5-20	3,500
Blockade Runner	2-7	4-20	Light or Medium	10-15	15-35	2,000-4,500
Brigantine	3-9	15-40	Light or Medium	5-20	5-25	4,000
Dugout/Canoe/Rowboat	1-3	1-12	Personal	½-1	Special	500-1,000
Carrack	4-12	40-60	Light – Heavy	25-50	20-40	17,000
Cog	6-15	5-15	Light or Medium	30-70	15-35	35,000
Cruiser	8-20	25-70	Medium - Heavy	45-90	20-30	60,000
Cutter	4-12	20-60	Light or Medium	2-8	35-50	10,000
Dhow	1-8	12-30	Personal or Light	1-6	15-35	8,500
Fishing Smack	2-9	6-12	Personal	3-9	10-25	5,500
Floating Palace	12-48	30-120	Any	30-120	5-10	150,000
Frigate	9-18	60-100	Heavy or Loaded	40-80	20-50	60,000
Galleon	12-60	150-300	Any	50-300	30-50	250,000
Galley	6-18	10-30	Personal or Light	2-10	25-50	12,500
Hulk	—	6-10	Any	20-60	Special	—
Longship	9-15	15-40	Personal	10	45	6,000
Schooner	9-18	20-40	Light-Medium	25-45	40-60	15,000
Sloop	6-24	10-40	Personal-Medium	10-25	15-45	20,000
Treasure Ship	24-60	20-60	Medium-Loaded	40-80	25-40	40,000
Warship	24-72	30-80	Loaded	20-60	20-40	75,000

Construction: equals the number of months required to build a vessel from scratch, not accounting for time spent lumbering or mining the necessary components. Construction time assumes everything needed to build the boat is present but unassembled.

Crew: represents the number of sailors required to safely operate the vessel. Ships without the minimum number of crewmen are considered immobile, though they can still raise an offense or defense if needed.

Weaponry: refers to the type of on-board offense the vessel can have mounted to it. One marked as personal means its crew defends it, making it relatively ineffective against armed ships or aquatic threats like a kraken. A lightly armed vessel has up to three light weapons, such as a ballista, scorpion, trebuchet, or even a low-caliber cannon; if the weapons are removed, an additional ton of cargo is storable, or an additional 10 crew can board - a combination is possible at the Castle Keeper's discretion. Medium-armed vehicles have heavier weaponry, possibly including catapults, dragoons, or cannons; they carry six to 10 such devices. Beyond this, the heavy vessel has anywhere between 15 to 30 weapons, usually covering the full scale of light through heavy, usually with a single massive cannon to ward off other ships. A loaded vessel is like a heavily-armed ship, except it stows 20 to 50 weapons, sometimes of various categories.

Cargo: is an expression of tonnage the vessel can carry; each ton equates to 250 EV.

Speed: measured in nautical miles, speed is how fast the vessel can travel over the course of 8 hours, under its normal travel method (sail or row, for example), assuming wind and weather conditions do not hinder it.

Cost: is naturally the cost, in gold pieces, to construct the vessel. In general, this amount, divided by 10, is also the amount of upkeep (wages paid) per month to keep it crewed and in working order.

Barge: a barge is a large flat-bottomed vessel mainly used to carry enormous loads through canals and narrow passages. Barges typically have no propulsion of their own, but are drawn and tugged by other vessels. Some barges are huge, and others quite small; the nature of the cargo determines their size. There have been barges meant to bear entire siege companies and others meant as floating palaces.

Blockade Runner: as the name implies, the ship is meant to get through a blockade, often with stealth and not violence, though one can be equipped with weapons if needed. These ships are quick and maneuverable, and are sometimes reconfigured from another ship to reduce construction times as that can be critical, especially under naval siege.

Brigantine: a small vessel with two masts, one of which is always square-sailed, and decked with a row of oars. Pirates favor this ship, the word brigantine itself being derived from "brigand's ship." These ships are closely related to a brig and can be easily confused with them, though they are much better equipped for distance travel.

Dugout/Canoe/Rowboat: dugouts are boats literally carved from a single tree, making them easy to create when supplies are available. They are cheap, but are limited in size, and mainly found among primitive cultures. A rowboat is simply a thin, long vessel lacking a sail, and it is powered solely by oars. Rowboats are often used for emergency situations or for entertainment, such as for individual fishing expeditions, though they can, and

have been, used for stealth because they are light and efficient. They can also be used in shallow water, such as in streams. Often, a rowboat will have an oarmaster who shouts commands and whips those who do not comply, but that is typical for the largest of rowboats only. The skill and strength of the crew limits the rowboat's speed.

Carrack: a true seaworthy ship, a carrack has at least three masts, the fore and main mast being square-rigged and the mizzen being lateen-rigged. These ships are equipped for long voyages and have a crew of 40 or more. Carracks are descendants of the larger barge, but they are designed for self-propulsion. Carracks are quite popular with sailors, especially adventuring captains, for they have both weather defense and a strong hull.

Cog: cogs are single-masted, square-sailed vessels primarily used for mercantile purposes. They are crewed by a small number of sailors, but they carry a heavy load. They are usually built out of hardwoods and are, therefore, relatively difficult to build and require a long time to construct.

Cruiser: cruisers are heavy warships designed for speed and functionality, having multiple rows of oars for quick release of cannon or motion and generally having four or more masts capable of supporting any rigging or sail to survive various weather conditions. Because these vessels are very advanced, they should not be easily available, and then, they should be nearly prohibitive in cost (a nation or city can afford them, and would use them as their navy's flagship, but these are too expensive for an individual to own), and it should be extremely rare for a nation to have more than a handful.

Cutter: cutters are single-sail vessels typically with a fore-and-aft rig and a mast set further back than a schooner's, making them slightly faster when travelling with the wind. The cutter's name derives from its ability to cut through water, even rough waves. Twenty individuals can crew a standard, patrol-style cutter, but larger war cutters require more crewmen.

Dhow: the largest dhow has a crew of about 39 sailors, but the average-size dhow only has 12. A dhow, by its design, is a lateen-sailed vessel, with a single mast and a curved bow, allowing them to travel along inner sea streams and shallow waters more easily.

Fishing Smack: a vessel designed to either travel on an inner sea, large lake, or open ocean in search of large masses of fish and other edible cargo. These vessels typically have a deep reservoir for carrying their catch, some reservoirs being big enough to hold large offerings like whales. The fishing smacks are manned by a well-trained unit, and they are often armed with harpoons and other needed devices.

Floating Palace: opulent in the extreme, a floating palace is a leisure barge built with the finest and grandest of components, and meant to both intimidate and to showcase the owner's wealth. In many ways, a floating palace is a house boat, but on a gigantic scale. Seldom does a floating palace reside anywhere but a landlocked county where large lakes are available, but it is possible to maneuver in very shallow water otherwise. A floating palace requires enormous funds and incredible amounts of time to construct, but, for those who desire such things, the price is a drop in the proverbial stream.

Frigate: a warship reinforced with metal armor, generally on the inside to the waterline. Frigates are normally capable of both sail- and oar-driven movement, though they are heavy and slow.

Galleon: a galleon is a large, multi-deck sailing vessel used for both commerce and war. They are expensive to build (yet cheaper in quantity due to the larger pieces of timber required) and operate, making them prime targets for piracy, when stealth can be used to approach them. Essentially, a galleon is a massive caravel (carrack) but with greater maneuverability. The greater maneuverability was attained by elongating the forecastle, causing greater dispersion of water. Galleons are, when made for war, armed heavily. These ships are ordinarily powered by wind alone, though they do have a double deck for rowers, when needed.

Galley: oar-powered galleys are smaller ships primarily used for transport and war. Some galleys have masts for sails should weather favor such travel. A galley typically holds 10-30 men, but cannot support large quantities of weaponry; they are normally used for quick assaults against slower-moving vessels and for breaching land.

Hulk: a hulk, unlike most other vessels, is a ship that floats but is not seaworthy. Basically, it is either a ship that is so utterly damaged that it can no longer service its intent, or it was never completed. These types of vehicles are ordinarily used as ballasts against invaders, set with massive amounts of weapons and charges, and set off when approached. Sometimes, they are used in the mercantile trade, housing several cargoes at once, so smaller boats do not have to pull to port to be loaded. Sometimes, hulks will be towed or allowed to float down a river, but they move at the speed of the current, and they are difficult to return to their starting point, so they are usually used for one-way trades.

Longship: as the name implies, a longship is a vessel with a long, narrow prow and beam, allowing the boat to float in extremely shallow water, water barely covering the ground. These ships are fast, maneuverable, and are often used for surprise raids and exploration. The ships do not often carry weapons of their own, but their stealth and ambush capacity make such things moot.

Schooner: schooners are dual-masted (or greater) sailing vessels that utilize fore-and-aft sails to capture the wind and they make a distinctive "puff" sound when traveling. They are great for long voyages and for carrying weight, but they can also be used for war, though they are quite limited in this aspect. Schooners are rather fast and can handle choppy and storm water with relative ease. Some schooners, such as the schooner Bowdoin, were designed for use in the Arctic, being built with stronger and thicker hulls and having smaller sails. As a result, they are an exception to the highlighted comment.

Sloop: sloops are sailing vessels, usually with a single mast holding a fore-and-aft sail cut in a triangular shape to give it pull and drag against and with the wind; its body is shaped to cut through the water much like a cutter. These boats are typically used for mercantile trade or transport, including the sale and transportation of slaves. A sloop designed to engage in battle is called a sloop-of-war.

Treasure Ship: a treasure ship is any large vessel specifically geared toward the containment of valuable objects, such as gold or ivory. They are, effectively, sail barges, but they are well-prepared to defend themselves. Despite their size, they are quite maneuverable.

Warship: this is the largest ship of war available. It is heavily fortified and loaded with massive weapons, nearly always with cannon of large caliber, and is crewed by well-trained sailors who double as effective land troops. Warships cannot dock at most ports because they simply do not have the necessary space to dock these massive ships. For this reason, supplies must be brought to the warships, revealing their greatest weakness: their supply chain. If gunpowder and cannon are common, this ship should slowly start to see development, but should be reserved for very special situations, as they are unequalled in naval battle.

TABLE 3.9 GENERAL EQUIPMENT

Item	Cost	Weight	EV	CAP.
Baghdad Battery	3,000 gp	1.5 lbs	1	—
Ball of Clay, 4 oz	3 cp	.25 lb	*	—
Bell (per piece)	1 sp	.25 lb	*	—
Bonesaw	1 gp	1 lb	.5	—
Camping Grate	5 gp	10 lbs	4	—
Chapbook (50 pages)	10 gp	1 lb	1	—
Chapbook, Illuminated (50 pages)	100 gp	1 lb	1	—
Charcoal, Bag, 1 Pound	5 cp	—	*	—
Cooking Tripod	10 gp	12 lbs	4	—
Copper Cone	5 sp	.5 lb	.5	—
Copper Wire	2 cp	—	*	—
Deck of Cards	7 sp	—	*	—
Fishing Net	5 sp	45 lbs	7	3
Folding Stool	15 gp	4 lbs	3	—
Hammer, Brass	10 gp	1 lb	1	—
Hollow Staff	20 gp	1.5 lbs	2	1
Invisible Ink	75 gp	.5 lb	1	—
Jar, Mason	1 gp	.5 lb	*	1
Jar, Pitch	3 gp	1 lb	1	—
Juggling Ball (per piece)	6 sp	.25 lb	*	—
Magnifying Glass	100 gp	—	*	—
Make-Up, 3 oz	8 sp	.3 lb	*	—
Marbles, Bag, 1 Pound	1 gp	1 lb	1	—
Marotte	3 gp	1.5 lbs	1	—
Meerschaum Pipe	150 gp+	—	*	—
Perfume/Cologne (per vial)	50 gp+	—	*	—
Printer's Block Set	200 gp	15 lbs	7	—
Steel Slag, Bag, 1 Pound	1 gp	1 lb	1	—
Suction Cup	6 gp	1 lb	1	—
Syringe	4 gp	—	*	—
Terrycloth	1 sp	.5 lb	*	—
Vampire Hunter's Kit	375 gp	5 lbs	3	—
Vial, Acid, 1 oz	125 gp+	.1 lb	*	—
Vial, Quicksilver, 1 oz	45 gp	.1 lb	*	—
Xoanon	15 gp	1	1	—

Items marked with a * have no appreciable EV. If carried in bulk (more than 10), treat the EV as 1 per 10 carried.

Baghdad Battery: a small pottery device with an alkaline and copper core which causes a small electrical charge to remain stored (maximum of 2 weeks), allowing it to be discharged when set against an object that would close the circuit, such as a metal door, a handle, or other item like copper wire. It is, effectively, a battery with barely enough charge to be noticeable (that is, it will not cause damage) but which can be frightening to those unaware of its potential. It may be possible, with an extensive array of these, to plate metal over another metal, such as in gold plating over lead. These are highly prized by alchemists and wizards and by those seeking to counterfeit coinage, hence the exorbitant price. The method of recharge is left to the Castle Keeper to determine, but it should not be an ordinary process - treat these devices as pseudo-magical in nature.

Ball of Clay: a chunk of malleable clay which is often used in these common ways: placed into a keyhole and allowed to dry, then carefully extracted with oil to obtain a replica of the tumblers; rolled over a parchment or piece of paper to lift a mark or phrase; formed to replicate or conceal a facial feature, such as a nose, and covered over with make-up to assist a disguise; create molds of all kinds, e.g. statues, tailored armor, candles, or pottery. It is because of this last, most common usage, that clay is not classified as a controlled substance. Looking for it in large quantities however raises the attention of the militia and rogues' guilds.

Bell: often cast in bronze or brass, a bell is simply a small implement that rings an audible alert when it is moved or struck, depending on how it is positioned. There are many types and sizes of bells, but the above stats assume a small, hand-held bell, such as what might be found in a tavern or inn. Adventurers would likely use these as security devices to place around a campsite perimeter, if magical alerting is unavailable, though they may not like carrying such easily disturbed noisemakers.

Bonesaw: a fine-toothed metal saw designed to hack and hew bone for amputation. In a pinch, it can double for a generic hacksaw or woodcutting instrument, but this ruins the blade in a matter of minutes, as the teeth are specifically intended for cutting bone.

Camping Grate: a portable iron casing which has a wrought pan in the bottom for the placement of embers, allowing a

fire to be started and safely maintained nearly anywhere. The grate is open in several places, about every four inches, and is uncovered, so rain or wet conditions can hinder the fire. This is often a device issued to a small military unit for personal use by the commanding officer, but it need not be so if desired.

Chapbook: bound in leather and sewn, a chapbook is a small 50-page book, either blank or written in. The subject for a chapbook is traditionally religious in nature, pertaining to one or more canonical stories the acolyte (cleric) would read aloud, but here it simply means any book, regardless of genre or subject matter. Different materials are possible, such as dragon hide, vellum, gilded paper, and human flesh, but these would need adjudication on a per-item basis and are not included in the above statistics.

Chapbook, Illuminated: very similar to the more common chapbook, an illuminated chapbook is simply one that has been professionally illustrated, usually for religious purposes, but it can also mean one that contains formulae for alchemical constructions or magical rituals. The Castle Keeper should decide if an illuminated chapbook is required for the making of a working spellbook or not. By default, these are always made of higher-grade materials than the lesser form, and the CK can decide they are considered "expert items" by definition.

Charcoal: the burned remains of wood and other flammable, organic objects, charcoal is often used for cooking even though lighting a fire tends to be easier. It also serves many other purposes, such as being used as a makeshift pen for fast scribbles, rubbing over an indentation to transcribe it to a paper surface, or even as an emetic when a person gets poisoned. In alchemy, charcoal has numerous applications. Rogues and those of a stealthy nature often smear their exposed skin and weapons with charcoal to darken them, making their chances of remaining unseen in darkness slightly better (by how much is the Castle Keeper's discretion, but it is suggested by no more than +1). Charcoal is a very versatile item in the hands of a creative player, and its multiple uses should be encouraged.

Cooking Tripod: forged from wrought iron, a cooking tripod is a heavy, mobile platform for attaching a kettle or pot above a fire, usually used by those in the field (i.e., soldiers) to prepare meals. Due to its three-legged stance, the tripod is very stable and can sometimes be adjusted to place the cooking dish closer, or further, from flame, depending on what is being made; the tripod can even act as a sort of rotisserie or spit if needed.

Copper Cone: a small to medium conical-shaped instrument used to amplify sound when placed against a door or wall. Sometimes, a mesh of wire is inserted in the cone to prevent parasitic infection. The larger the cone, the greater its sound amplification. In a pinch, a very large cone could be used as a replacement for a musical instrument, such as a tuba or horn, but the wire mesh, if present, would need to be removed. It is suggested a small bonus (+1 at best) to listen checks is granted in situations where a copper cone can be beneficial.

Copper Wire: a thin strand of pulled copper most often used in these ways: artistically, such as embellishing an engraving or work of art; as a makeshift lock pick or trap springing device; a trap component, with or without electrical discharge. A single copper wire is approximately six inches long with a diameter of 1/16th inch. Acquiring thicker or longer wire is possible, with corresponding increases in cost.

Deck of Cards: many varieties of cards exist, with some heavily illustrated and containing varying amounts of individual cards to complete a set, but the standard version represented here contains 52 separated into four suits of 13 cards each, all decorated with some lavishness. Cards are mostly used for gambling, though fortune-tellers also use them; every card in a fortune-telling deck has a unique image, and each image has its own meaning.

Fishing Net: designed to be thrown over a boat or placed in a river or stream to catch fish, this is a woven net of cord with smaller gaps than an ordinary net, lightening the load, and rendering it ineffectual as a weapon except against the weakest and smallest of targets. Nets are typically made to fill a very large area and can be drawn tight; they can bear up to 500 lbs. The rope used may be reinforced if the fisherman using it is hunting lobster or crab, but this type of fishing net would weigh much more and could be used as a workable weapon.

Folding Stool: a portable, backless chair that has two legs (each with two feet) that fold inward, allowing the whole to be carried readily on the back or in a shoulder harness, which comes with the device. They are made of steel and the seat itself padded to provide some comfort. They are favored by those who must walk a lot, such as clergy, scouts, or generals, and possessing one is often considered a sign of importance.

Hammer, Brass: a small hammer composed of brass used to strike and embed a fixed image upon a surface, usually a brass or wooden item specially prepared by heating. Certain motifs, notably those of coinage, are considered property of the state, and possession or illicit manufacture is a crime, but personal imagery, such as the making of a signet ring, is otherwise acceptable.

Hollow Staff: a deceptive item used by smugglers and rogues, a hollow staff is a normal quarterstaff that looks like a walking stick. The inside has been hollowed to allow the insertion of small items, such as jewelry, scrollwork, gemstones, and the like. They are normally made with a screw cap or with a pin disguised as a stud to allow entrance to the contents. A hollow staff is not an effective weapon, as it is both too light and too delicate to be wielded with any force.

Invisible Ink: despite its name, invisible ink is not truly invisible. It is hidden until a specific course of action, such as being put to flame or having lemon juice poured over, causes a reaction, which then reveals whatever was written with the ink. This is a pseudo-magical tool, most likely found in the abode of a wizard

or alchemist, but many people have reasons to want it, even for non-nefarious reasons such as, for example, secretly sending messages during a time of war. When visible, the ink is always black in color. It is not technically difficult to make, but the demand and quasi-legality of its manufacture make it a pricey item; the above stats assume enough ink to write one standard page, or about 150 words.

Jar, Mason: a glass jar with one of two sealing methods, screw cap or lever-action release, both of which make the container airtight and waterproof, perfect for preserving that which is inside. The lid is normally always bronze, and the container itself typically thicker than a vial, making it somewhat sturdier. A food item placed within a mason jar remains edible 1-5 days longer than normal.

Jar, Pitch: the best known form of pitch is a flammable substance used to repel boarders on a ship. It functions as flaming oil, dealing 1d6+1 damage for 1d6+3 rounds if untreated. Another form of pitch is a type of mortar for masonry projects equal in strength to a non-magical wood glue. The Castle Keeper chooses which form of pitch is in the jar, and prices should vary depending on which form of pitch is chosen.

Juggling Ball: a small, often highly colorful (red, green, and blue are very common) rubber ball used by jesters and other entertainers to show their skill. Most entertainers can juggle three to five at a time. Some resourceful individuals use juggling balls as a means to train their hands for the art of pick-pocketing and even as a distraction for that art in practice. Others will insert small valuables into a juggling ball (nothing larger about 1 ounce) for smuggling. A juggling ball by itself is useless as a weapon, but becomes quite effective when contact poisons, acids, or other substances are applied to its surface.

Magnifying Glass: a specially constructed glass which causes things viewed through it to appear larger, potentially revealing a viewed item's flaws or imperfections. It has no ability to detect or reveal illusions, nor can it detect the presence of magic. In professions in which extremely fine detail is required, such as gem cutting, having a magnifying glass is crucial to success. Indeed, it could be considered impossible to perform the task without the instrument. For tasks where visual aid is helpful, such as checking the inside of a lock or astutely ascertaining the placement of a secret door, a bonus of +1 can be given to the endeavor when using a magnifying glass. The entire area must be carefully examined, which takes triple the normal time. This is because the magnifying glass, while making what is viewed larger, also focuses the viewer's attention onto a smaller surface area. Lastly, a magnifying glass can be used to focus and shape light, and to start a fire. It might kill a very small bug (like an ant) after prolonged exposure, but these items should be considered crude by modern comparison.

Make-Up: varying types of facial applications ranging from face powders to lighten or darken skin tone to hair coloration or extensions and the like. Make-up is simply the basic component for an actor or anyone wishing to disguise their identity. The item comes in a small brass box, which helps compensate for the relatively high asking price.

Marbles, Bag: usually glass, or sometimes ivory, wood, stone, or even metal, a marble is simply a small globe often used to play a game, but the adventurer is more likely to use them in other ways. Because they are spheres, they are great at detecting sloping passages or uneven surfaces, can be used as makeshift caltrops, used to determine the depth of a pool, or used to determine if the liquid in a pool is actually water. A bag of marbles contains roughly 50 marbles, which can cover a 5x10 area

Marotte: similar in construction to a mace or scepter, a marotte is a lightweight, highly decorated prop stick. Its decorations include flamboyant tassels; a smiling, elaborately carved face; and sometimes bells or candles for lighting effects. These non-magical items are used by storytellers to enhance the mood or to produce an effect similar to what one might see from a stage magician. Because they have been known to contain small concealed weapons, such as daggers, many kingdoms do not allow just anyone to carry a marotte. In fact, usually only the court jester is entitled that honor.

Meerschaum Pipe: carved with exquisite attention to detail and made of the finest materials available, meerschaum pipes can be considered expert quality simply by definition. They are used by those who do not want to soil themselves by placing a smoked item like a cigar or cigarette into their mouths. The pipe is stylish, and its users, mostly the wealthy, believe it adds to their noble appearance and shows they have great taste and savoir-faire. Many a gnome or wizard is fascinated by these devices. Some of the pipes are very expensive.

Perfume/Cologne: a liquid made from the better-smelling parts of flowers or animals in an attempt to quell smell or attract others. Perfume is often used because bathing conditions are either impossible, for example, a tainted water supply, expensive, or simply because the individual has no sense of cleanliness. Some intelligent monsters also make use of perfume to dissuade transgressors. For example, a dragon might leave its scent so animals and lesser beasts leave it alone. Others use it to nullify some remnant of themselves, such as an evil cleric in command of a small copse of ghasts. A single vial, if used lovingly, is enough to last for 3-6 months of daily application; however, this dosage is unusual and so it typically lasts 1 week, at best, most often dried in the first (and only) application. Lastly, one final use of perfume or cologne is that, due to how it is made, it creates a terrible pain when placed in, or onto, an open sore. This allows it to detect things that may not be noticeable otherwise.

Printer's Block Set: composed of individual wood blocks, each engraved and etched with a letter, symbol, or number, these are used by a printer to dip in ink and then roll or stamp to produce several near-exact copies of a document. They are usually considered items of state or township, but if the setting is akin to the Renaissance era in nature, the wood blocks are instead made of metal, and it is not improbable to have

newspapers and the like, or mass announcements pinned across a town decrying or decreeing something. These are not used in the making of paper currency.

Steel Slag: slag is the leftover bits of metal from the creation of a metal item. These bits of metal are either too small to reuse or are chipped off from the original piece and forgotten.There are many applications for slag, such as using it to determine if something is electrified, but the primary purpose is as makeshift caltrops, these causing but one 1 point of damage to those crossing them. A bag contains enough material to cover a 5x5 area densely enough to be effective.

Suction Cup: there are two types of suction cups available: natural, and manufactured. The natural variety is found and procured from a creature like an octopus. The manufactured variety consists of a rubber hemisphere and an air bladder much like the type used to stoke a fire. The cup is fitted to the area where it will suction, and then the bladder pumped until it has sucked the air from beneath the cup, creating a vacuum, allowing it to stay once the bladder is removed. The main purpose of this is for cleaning, such as during a surgery, but some argue that it assists in breaking and entering into areas protected by glass. The Castle Keeper determines whether or not this application is true.

Syringe: a glass tube with a sealant at one end and a sharp, hollow needle at the other. Liquid can be drawn inside, and then injected through the needle. Healers often use them to inject pain reducers and other medicines or to extract liquid, but assassins and other notorious individuals make equal use of them. If the needle is not sterilized, it accumulates germs, which may lead to the onset of disease. The details are left to the imagination.

Terrycloth: woven fabric, usually wool, which can absorb large amounts of water, terrycloth is intended to be used as part of the bathing process. This the fantasy equivalent of a towel. All adventurers should carry terrycloth, as it has many uses: adventurers can douse it in water and wrap it around their mouth to prevent smoke inhalation, or use it to keep cool in hot environs, or they can use it to wash and clean a variety of items, including themselves, and so forth. The above statistics represent the ordinary 3-foot x 1-foot piece of fabric; larger versions should be more expensive.

Vampire Hunter's Kit: a small wooden case in which several tools of the trade are kept, including a clove of garlic, a vial of holy water, a small mallet, three stakes, a chapbook of religious ritual, and a bonesaw intended for decapitation. The kit does not come with instruction manuals, and these kits are rarely sold on the open market. Precise contents may vary based on region of the world and whether vampires are a known threat. The case is designed specifically to house its contents and cannot easily store other items, thus the item includes no entry for capacity.

Vial, Acid: there are many types of acid. Some are far stronger than others, and others simply do not function against a particular material. The type represented here is a metal-eating acid, which is normally stored in a clay or glass vial, and is intended to be used by those in the smith crafts to etch and engrave, especially for those working in copper. However, nefarious people, like rogues, also use acid when their skills otherwise fail, though the process is dreadfully slow. Exact details are subject to Castle Keeper's approval, but the better the result, the more expensive the purchase.

Vial, Quicksilver: a glass container holding an amount of elemental mercury, i.e. quicksilver, it is used in numerous ways: dropped to the floor, it can detect sloping passages or the natural flow of water; it can detect a change in temperature that may go unnoticed without it; and medicinally, mercury has long been thought to provide many different effects, the most common being to serve as anti-venom. It has countless applications in alchemy, however long term exposure to mercury can result in damage to kidneys and lungs (permanent -1 to constitution), damage to the brain (permanent insanity), even death.

Xoanon: a crudely carved primitive statuette made from wood, bone, or ivory to depict a family member, or a political or religious figure. It acts as a sort of focus (votive) or holy symbol most often used by barbaric peoples. In some religions, a xoanon is considered an element of sympathetic magic, acting as a sort of channel between victim and caster (treat it as a non-magical "voodoo doll").

MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT

It's not fun for the Castle Keeper or the player to constantly make checks for equipment. If, however, equipment checks are common, it is equally important that those characters willing to take care of their gear should benefit. Armor and weapons need oiling and cleaning. Clothing needs patching and stitching. Bedrolls need drying out and proper rolling. General gear, especially leather, needs to be kept dry and clean. The list can go on to encompass almost all the equipment.

Characters actively taking care of their equipment by informing the CK that it is a normal part of their daily routine gain a +1 on all equipment checks, whether the long wastage and usage charts are used or the simpler quick-check system is used (see Chapter 9 Equipment Wastage).

There are two times during every adventure that a character should look over his things to see if they need repair. Whenever a character is about to go on an adventure, he should check out his equipment to make sure everything is in good shape. Along the same lines, when a character is about to enter a new city or town he hasn't been in before, he checks his equipment to make sure everything is in good condition. In each of these cases, the player rolls a d20, and on a roll of 18 or above, something needs to be fixed, or it will break at a bad time. A random roll determined by the Castle Keeper should be made to see what item needs repairing.

CHAPTER 4 – NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS

A non-player character, or NPC, is a character played by the Castle Keeper who has a role in the adventure or game. There are several approaches the CK can take in dealing with NPCs, but no one approach is superior to the other. Every NPC encounter or planned encounter can be different, and it is up to the CK to determine the level of complexity the encounter deserves. Simple encounters can be just that, requiring no real recourse to any referenced rules. Long, drawn out, interactive encounters, by necessity, require more structure to determine the actual play and its long-term outcome. It may be best to incorporate a hybrid of all the rules. Also, as a CK, you should prepare yourself to quickly react to adding NPCs to the game by familiarizing yourself with all the approaches to managing NPCs, but you should only use the full extent of the following rules when absolutely necessary.

NPCS DEFINED

The NPC is an essential part of any **Castles & Crusades** game, as the characters encounter them in almost every session. NPCs play a variety of roles from the barkeep at the tavern that passes on juicy rumors for a few coins to the well-paid henchmen who drags the wounded character to safety and healing. The NPC is a multi-faceted tool a Castle Keeper can use in an almost limitless number of circumstances. NPCs can start games by supplying the player characters with the where, why, and what of an adventure. They can advance stalled adventures by supplying yet even more information to confused characters. They can heal wounded characters, can attack them, and can either serve them or lord over them. NPCs serve as the catalyst for plot points, awarding characters for success or punishing them for misdeeds. There is almost no end to the utility of NPCs so long as the CK understands the value of the tool at hand.

CKs should note that NPCs are not limited to humans and demi-humans. Monsters, deities, and even sentient magic items can all be non-player characters in the ongoing adventure, and it is wise to treat them as such. They can interact with the characters just as any henchman or hireling does, and may have information, equipment, or treasure that may be of value to the PCs. However, there are exceptions. For example, the random goblin is meant to be skewered, not interacted with. He becomes a NPC if he is captured and begins conversing or cooperating with the PCs.

This chapter deals with non-player characters. Below are general rules and guidelines for the creation and use of NPCs, including types of NPCs, their reactions, their loyalty: it also provides hiring and equipping guidelines. Take note that any NPC is as powerful as the Castle Keeper desires him to be, and even the transient can be a retired class-based NPC. Although the player characters may only briefly encounter such an NPC, he could turn out to be more than they realize, and he may actually be of great importance to their further adventures.

CLASS-BASED OR NON-CLASS-BASED NPCS

CLASS-BASED NPCS: Class-based NPCs possess the same abilities as characters. CKs create them using one of the 13 classes from the **Players Handbook**, the multi-classing rules, the class-and-a-half rules, or any other variant or dual classes the CK has on and. They include henchmen, some hirelings, many adherents, and on rare occasions, creatures. They are rangers, fighters, knights, druids, wizards, etc.

NON-CLASS-BASED NPCS: The list of non-class-based NPCs is extensive and includes any NPC not based on a class. Hirelings are the most notable of these, but these also include adherents and creatures. These NPCs generally play only minor roles in any game.

THE TYRANNY OF RULES

As has been mentioned innumerable times before, the pace and mood of a game can be shattered by the strict adherence to rules, tables, charts, and the like. Often it is far more important to ignore complex rules in favor of propelling the story and adventure forward. Running NPCs is no exception to this. The CK often finds himself wanting to move quickly through encounters that might not be germane to the game, or ones that might be boring, misleading, or distracting. It certainly isn't necessary the CK understand the difference between an adherent and a hireling. What is important for the game's pace and mood is that the CK knows what each individual NPC is doing, the extent of his role, and how he reacts to certain situations. With the exception of henchman, the Castle Keeper can accomplish this from behind the screen with little recourse to rules.

Running NPCs on the fly isn't as easy as winging combat, but it can be done by keeping a few simple guidelines in mind.

1 **NOTES:** Make detailed notes about those NPCs the characters are going to encounter more than once and with which they have prolonged relationships. Note how the NPCs react to the various personalities of the characters themselves. Also note how they should react to dangerous or scary situations, and note how they might react to character requests for information.

2 **PERSONALIZE:** Give each NPC a quick personality. Expand the NPC's personality as the encounter grows. The more the NPC is interacted with, the more personality he needs. Be sure to keep notes, as it will come back to haunt you when your players later pull out their notes and want to interact with an NPC you previously provided for them.

3 **NAMES:** Have a good resource of names handy to make the NPCs different and to avoid redundancy. Having a world with 14 Otto the barkeeps is not a good idea.

4 **GIVE THEM LIFE:** Though you have to maintain your objectivity, you should treat each NPC as if he were your own character in terms of his desire to stay alive. Remember the survival instinct is a huge one, so no NPC will happily die for a PC for no good reason.

5 **MAKE THEM DIFFERENT:** Some NPCs are cowards, and others are heroes. Some are candlestick makers, some are innkeepers, and some are none of the above. Be sure to play each NPC true to his own ends and desires, making each more than a one-dimensional, cookie-cutter character, and everyone will derive more enjoyment from the experience of interacting with him.

The veteran Castle Keeper knows the dynamics of the table, the game, or the adventure, and he will occasionally call on NPCs to add more clarity to an encounter or to provide more overall detail. Knowing when to do this is vitally important to the game's pace, mood, and fun. Don't become so bogged down in the desire to keep encounters simple that you shuck all manner of clarity from the game, evolving your table into a hybrid of mixed or lost notes and rambling encounter memories. Reacting from the hip can be very good, but in the case of NPCs, it can be extremely difficult, as the sheer number of NPCs the characters encounter will eventually overrun your ability to keep up with them. This is especially true with henchman who must interact with the character on a day-to-day, game-by-game basis. These NPCs need more, not less, clarity.

When in need of clarity, refer to the following rules, lists, and charts as needed.

THE POWER OF CLARITY

NPC interaction can be terribly difficult and complicated. Months of game-time character (PC and NPC) interactions can build up detailed histories that need tracking from one game to the next. CKs should use the descriptions and tables below to help govern these interactions. In **Castles & Crusades** there are four types of NPCs: adherents, henchmen, hirelings, and monsters. Each of these are described on the following pages. The CK runs the majority of the NPCs, the henchmen being the possible exception, as he may decide to allow the player character to play his own henchmen.

Different parameters govern each of the different types of NPCs, as explained below.

ADHERENTS

Created and played entirely by the Castle Keeper, adherents are the everyday people the characters encounter and interact with. The list of adherents is inexhaustible, but might include the following: priests of orders, commoners, soldiers, barkeeps, guardsmen, shopkeepers, smiths, etc. The adherent is an essential tool for the Castle Keeper to explain, facilitate, or hinder an adventure. The CK most commonly uses them in role-playing scenarios where players are attempting to find information or are building relationships for future gain. CKs should use them at all levels of play.

CREATING THE ADHERENT

The Castle Keeper needs to determine what type of adherent the adventure needs: transient or permanent. Transient adherents work in brief encounters with the characters. Permanent adherents are those meant to be long-standing NPCs the characters will interact with over a number of gaming sessions. Class-based adherents use the guidelines given for creating henchmen (see below) in creating them. Use the following guidelines to create non-class-based adherents. For adherents who are guardsmen, scouts, men-at-arms, or similar combat-oriented professions, refer to **Table 4.17 Hirelings** to determine their hit dice and abilities. Both types of adherents share the following statistics:

Primary Attribute: Adherents do not generally receive primary and secondary attributes at all. If the CK wishes to give them primary attributes, then he may certainly do so at his own discretion. To do so, follow the rules outlined for monsters in

Monsters & Treasure under Saves, allowing them mental and physical attributes categories only.

Hit Die: Generally, adherents have a d4 HD, though Castle Keepers may want to give some transients a d6 or even a d8, depending on circumstances.

Alignment: Adherents are almost always neutral, unless the adventure or scenario calls for a specific alignment.

Weapons: Unless they are class-based, adherents are not trained in the use of nor have any real knowledge of weapons. If forced to fight and their morale holds up, they fight using whatever they can get their hands on. They always fight at a -4 unless the CK specifically declares them as being proficient in a particular weapon. For example, a halberdier is proficient in the use of a halberd, but cannot pick up a military pick and wield it effectively.

Armor: Unless class-based, the adherent cannot wear armor of any type unless the CK specifically allows it.

Abilities: The adherent has no abilities beyond that of his occupation. A tanner cannot hide in shadows; his skill is to work with leather. Unless the CK determines that some adherents are very powerful individuals with various skills and abilities.

The following table lists 100 types of adherents, and a brief description of their profession follows. A parenthetical indicating the adherent's standard challenge base follows each listing. The CB reflects the PCs' likelihood of encountering this particular profession in regions with pre-determined economic structures (for more on this, refer to **Chapter 6, Economic Tiers of Regions**). This adherent list is not exhaustive; the CK may expand it as needed.

TABLE 4.1 TYPES OF ADHERENTS

Name	Challenge Base
Acrobat	12
Advisor/Consultant	12
Advocate/Lawyer/Barrister	12
Agister/Horse and Pony Tender	12
Alchemist	18
Amanuensis	18
Ambassador/Diplomat	18
Apothecary/Druggist	18
Archer/Bowman [18 for Balister/Crossbowman]	12
Archiator/Chirurgeon/Leech/Physician	18
Archivist/Chartulary	12
Arkwright/Cooper	12
Armorer/Armor Smith	12 or 18
Artificer/Engineer/Ginor	12
Artist/Artisan	12 or 18
Assassin/Murderer	18
Assayer	18
Atilliator/Crossbow Maker	18
Aurifaber/Goldsmith	18
Axle Tree Maker/Wheelwright/Cartwright	12
Bailiff/Barleyman	12
Baker	12
Beggar	12
Blacksmith/Smug/Forge Arm	12
Bladesmith/Edge Tool Maker	12
Blender/Clothier	12
Block Printer	18
Boatswain/Bosun	18
Botcher/Cobbler/Tailor	12
Bottler/Flasher/Glazier	18
Bounty Hunter	12
Bowyer/Fletcher	12
Braider/Cordwinder/Roper	12
Brass Founder/Yellowsmith/Brazier	18
Breakman/Mason/ Brickburner	12
Brightsmith/Whitesmith	18
Burglar/Sneak Thief	12
Cad/Servant/Menial	12
Cantator (Cantatrice)	12
Carpenter/Woodworker	12
Cartographer/Mapmaker	18
Chandler	12
Charlatan	12
Cheapjack/Hawker	18
Claker/Magician [18 for Genuine]	12
Cleric/Priest/Acolyte	12
Cook/Chef	12
Counterfeiter	18
Deathsman/Executioner	12
Decretist/Religious Sage	12
Departer/Refiner/Smelter	18
Dog Breaker/Animal Trainer	12
Dog Leech/Veterinarian	18
Dragoman/Guide/Interpreter	12
Ellerman/Oilman	12
Farmer/Freeman	12
Freebooter	18
Geiger/Musician	12
Gob/Jack/Able Seaman	12
Greensmith/Brownsmith/Coppersmith	12
Helmsman	18
Herbalist/Spicer	12
Illuminator	18
Infantryman [18 for Man-at-Arms/Heavy]	12

Intelligencer/Spy	18
Ironmaster/Ironmonger	12
Jester	18
Jobmaster/Caravan Guide	18
Lapidary/Jewelsmith	12
Lederer/Leatherworker	12
Mango/Slaver	12
Merchant	12 or 18
Mintmaster	18
Perchemear/Paper Maker	12
Picklock	18
Pickpocket	12
Point/Scout	12
Prostitute	12
Rattlewatch/Militia	12
Redar/Dreamsmith	12
Redsmith	18
Saboteur	18
Saddler	18
Safecracker	18
Sage	18
Schrimpschonger/Ivory Carver	12
Scribe/Scrivener	12
Scryer/Diviner/Seer/Vizier	12
Silversmith	12
Solider/Mercenary	12 or 18
Soper/Soap Boiler/Soap Maker	18
Taster	12
Taxman	12
Tide Waiter/Inspector	12
Turnkey/Jailer	18
Valet	18
Weatherspy	12
Welter/Horseman/Cavalry/Knight	18
Woodreeve/Ranger	12
Zoographer/Breeder	12

Acrobat: an itinerant (traveling) entertainer skilled in dexterous acts, such as tightrope walking, tumbling, and gymnastics. Acrobats are often part of a larger performing group, for example, a member of a circus or theatre troupe. Some are rumored to be versed in stealth or theft.

Advisor/Consultant: an expert in a specific field of knowledge, for example, war, religion, politics, magic, or economics. The advisor's opinion is sought when matters of state or kingdom are decided, and often has an active participation in the result based upon his advice.

Advocate/Lawyer/Barrister: a person trained in the field of legal enforcement whose duty it is to extend the full protection and strength of the law in court in service as prosecutor or defender of the accused.

Agister/Horse and Pony Tender: an individual who is tasked with the grooming, feeding, and care of horses and ponies during their stay in a stable or equerry. Many are skilled in training, riding, or evaluating equines, but most are not capable of performing acts of mounted combat or equestrian feats (such as a galloping jump).

Alchemist: someone trained in the arts of alchemy, able to produce potions and powders which mimic magical effects (excluding those of a healing sort) but are not truly magical in nature. Many wizards pursue studies in alchemy, often being referred to as "hedge wizards". The limits of alchemical substances, prices, and availability are subject to the Castle Keeper's discretion.

Amanuensis: this usually refers to any unskilled manual laborer, but may also refer to a person who writes notation or copies a written work, retaining the original language.

Ambassador/Diplomat: a government official living or visiting another country, acting as a representative for such things as treaties, trade affairs, or other political missions. In many cases, where laws are broken by citizens of the ambassador's homeland, within the borders of the foreign state, the ambassador takes the role of advocate.

Apothecary/Druggist: maker of compounds and salves for medicinal purposes which combine both herbal and alchemical remedies. Many apothecaries are also capable of procuring, identifying, and manufacturing poisons and drugs. The effects are usually quasi-magical.

Archer/Bowman [Balister/Crossbowman]: skilled in the use of a long or short bow. A balister/crossbowman is one versed in the use of various types of crossbows. These individuals are not usually capable of making such weapons, but can "field repair" one, keeping it in a working condition.

Archiator/Chirurgeon/Leech/Physician: a non-spellcasting healer who can set bones, draw blood, diagnose and treat disease or injury. Also skilled in anatomical studies, these individuals often have a more in-depth knowledge about specific types of creatures, mainly humanoids and monstrous humanoids. The healing capability and cost of the archiator is subject to the Castle Keeper's adjudication, but it is suggested that it be slow, painful (not damaging, but impairing), and costly.

Archivist/Chartulary: an individual responsible for the upkeep, storage, and retrieval of written works, maps, and other items of significance, often at the behest of a government or wealthy collector. This occupation is much like a modern librarian or curator.

Arkwright/Cooper: a maker of chests, boxes, coffers, barrels, casks, and other wooden storage devices assembled with iron fittings. Many arkwrights possess rudimentary skill in metal

bending, braising, and repairing, but they are not as proficient with wood as a carpenter, nor as versed in iron as a blacksmith.

Armorer/Armor Smith: a person trained in tailoring, manufacturing, and repairing metal armor, sometimes specifically to a single type, such as chain or plate. In a setting where firearms exist, an armorer would also craft and repair them.

Artificer/Engineer/Ginor: a military specialist trained in the construction, use, and repair of siege-related equipment, ranging from ballistae to towers and tactics, such as sapping or ramming. They are also responsible for the maintenance of castle equipment, such as portcullises or well winches.

Artilliator/Crossbow Maker: a person who makes, repairs, and designs crossbows of all kinds, except for very large examples used as siege equipment, where they simply act as advisors for their construction. Artilliators do not make quarrels or bolts for crossbows, but leave that task to the bowyer.

Artist/Artisan: any skilled craftsperson performing the duties and tasks of a trade not otherwise covered, such as painting, sculpting, or working with exotic materials.

Assassin/Murderer: a member of the assassin class from the **Players Handbook** hired to kill or eliminate an enemy or group of enemies. Murderers perform the same function but are not of the assassin class. Costs are usually high, and locating an assassin can be difficult, as they do not typically advertise their services. Assassinations and murders are illegal in many societies.

Assayer: a person who evaluates and estimates the value of an object, such as a statue or livestock. In a mine, an assayer analyzes metal ore to determine the quantity and quality of gold, silver, and other precious or usable metals in a mine.

Aurifaber/Goldsmith: a specialist in handling, treating, engraving, and using gold for any craft except that of coin making. Costs are typically high, and the customer must provide the gold used, though the customer can lower the cost significantly by having the object plated in gold instead.

Axle Tree Maker/Wheelwright/Cartwright: a maker and repairer of wheels, carts, wagons, and all manner of wheeled vehicles, including chariots and carriages.

Bailiff/Barleyman: an officer of the court whose duty it is to enforce laws through arrest and general civil service, including keeping the peace at events such as gladiatorial combats and executions.

Baker: an individual trained in the culinary art of making various pastries: pies, cakes, or cookies. Many bakers are knowledgeable about food preservation, spices, and edible herbs.

Beggar: often an itinerant, disfigured, or unemployable person who earns a living by begging. Some beggars are skilled pickpockets, and many are aware of rumors and "street secrets." Beggars commonly carry disease, but not all are truly afflicted, with some faking a disease for sympathy.

Blacksmith/Smug/Forge Arm: a person trained in making, designing, and repairing tools and equipment made of iron or steel, such as horseshoes, nails, hammers, and the like. Depending on the size of the community, a blacksmith may be specialized in producing one specific item. In very small settlements, a blacksmith often is responsible for making weapons (except bows and crossbows) and armor, and he often doubles as any other type of smith, although his ability and quality will not be as good as a blacksmith in a larger community..

Bladesmith/Edge Tool Maker: a manufacturer and repairer of items meant to retain an edge, such as a knife, scythe, sickle, or sword.

Blender/Clothier: a maker of various fabrics, such as silk or cotton, who can also produce clothing tailored to the customer, including various colors or additions, like lace frills. A blender is typically unskilled in the use of leather, but does know how to sew and cut it, and so can shape it to some minor degree.

Block Printer: a skilled producer of bound books, advertisements, and other printed material, typically of religious tracts or governmental decrees, but any subject matter is possible.

Boatswain/Bosun: an individual in charge of the maintenance of rigging, cables, anchors, and sails aboard a nautical vessel, often also acting as an enforcer of naval law and captain's orders among the crew.

Botcher/Cobbler/Tailor: someone who makes, customizes, and repairs shoes, often from scrap material. The more highly trained the individual, the nicer the title bestowed, so that a tailor indicates more professionalism than a cobbler, which is a step above botcher.

Bottler/Flasher/Glazier: a manufacturer of objects made of glass, including window panels (both stained and not), bottles, and flasks.

Bounty Hunter: one who tracks and apprehends (or kills, depending on the terms of the contract) fugitives who have, thus far, escaped the penalties of their crime.

Bowyer/Fletcher: a skilled craftsperson who designs, makes, repairs, and sells bows for archery or war. They usually also deal in the trade and manufacturing of bow accessories, such as quivers, arrows, and bolts, as well as variant arrowheads. Many are former warriors and are quite adept at their craft.

Braider/Cordwinder/Roper: a craftsperson in the trade of making and repairing rope or twine, generally from hemp or tweed, but also from more exotic materials, like silk or hair.

Brass Founder/Yellowsmith/Brazier: someone who makes, repairs, and finishes items made of brass and its related alloys.

Breakman/Mason/Brickburner: a professional in the art of using stone or brick for construction, including the making or quarrying of materials. These individuals are often tightly-knit and formed into guilds, and each is usually quite knowledgeable in the fields of geometry and architecture, sometimes doubling in the role of architect.

Brightsmith/Whitesmith: a person who works in light metal, such as tin, aluminum, or pewter. Sometimes they work for other smiths, doing finishing or polishing work.

Burglar/Sneak Thief: a member of the rogue class from the Players Handbook who enters a building to steal valuable items within it, without intent of causing physical harm to occupants. Sneak thieves perform the same function but are not of the rogue class. This profession is unlawful or illegal in many locations and therefore, it is usually more difficult to find someone willing to perform the service. However, some burglars have a more legal job in testing a structure's present security measures, and in this role, they are considered advisors.

Cad/Servant/Menial: a domestic worker, sometimes unskilled, tasked with various duties, such as cleaning toiletry, folding linen, or delivering messages, though any menial job is possible.

Cantator (Cantatrice): a performer skilled in singing and sometimes oration. For large events, like a circus or play, a cantator is often hired to attract the attention of potential customers, acting as a barker. Some cantators are members of the bard class.

Carpenter/Woodworker: an individual trained in designing, crafting, repairing, decorating, and maintaining objects made of wood, including buildings, such as barns or sheds. As carpentry tools can be quite specific, many actually manufacture their own, and thus also have a rudimentary knowledge of the blacksmithing trade.

Cartographer/Mapmaker: someone capable of producing or reproducing a map or navigational chart, complete with legend. Many cartographers take great pride in their precision and are very skilled geographers and surveyors.

Chandler: a craftsperson in the trade of making candles, typically from tallow, but also from beeswax and other materials

Charlatan: a fake or fraud offering services for which no actual ability is possessed. Charlatans usually pretend to be members of the medical or religious occupations. Some are actually members of the illusionist class in the **Players Handbook**.

Cheapjack/Hawker: a merchant dealing in shoddily constructed or misleading merchandise. He often sells the items at great discount, but the items are highly likely to be of substandard quality. This need not always be the case. For instance, the cheapjack could simply be fencing stolen goods for the thieves' guild, and is, therefore, willing to accept a low price to move the items.

Claker/Magician: one who is, or pretends to be, a member of the wizard class found within the **Players Handbook**.

Cleric/Priest/Acolyte: a religiously indoctrinated person of the cleric class as presented in the **Players Handbook**.

Cook/Chef: a skilled person who plans, procures ingredients, and creates meals. A cook often has extensive knowledge of edible plants, spices, and various forms of alcohol.

Counterfeiter: an individual who produces fraudulent goods, especially coins and documents, though anything of value can be, and likely is, counterfeited. Counterfeiters do not generally advertise their trade, and they can be very expensive to hire, as their profession is normally considered illegal.

Deathsman/Executioner: an individual given legal obligation to end the life of another as punishment for crime. The execution is often performed in a public manner, and many executioners are allowed to keep tokens from their victims, as their pay is not generally very high. A skilled deathsman can judge the weight and height of a pending victim with good accuracy.

Decretist/Religious Sage: a person well-versed in the intricacies of religious doctrine, dogma, history, and practice.

Departer/Refiner/Smelter: a tradesperson who removes impurities from excavations to yield pure substances, such as iron, gold, or silver. These individuals often possess an in-depth knowledge regarding various mineral poisons and acids.

Dog Breaker/Animal Trainer: in general, dog breaker refers specifically to one who handles, grooms, and trains canines. However, it may also reference any person who trains any type of animal, the training occurring over the course of several weeks. They generally train one to three types of related animals, have remarkable understanding and knowledge of animal traits, and can provide details about the quality of any specific animal, assuming it is one the person trains.

Dog Leech or Veterinarian: an archiator that specializes exclusively in the treatment of animals such as dogs, cats, cows, and horses.

Dragoman/Guide/Interpreter: someone who communicates and translates from one spoken language into another and also assists in reaching a given destination through knowledge of the local terrain. They are not usually expected to fight, though many are capable. Some are members of the ranger class as provided in the **Players Handbook**.

Ellerman/Oilman: a merchant selling various types of oil, including kerosene (if available) and those culled from whale or seal fat. They also sell lanterns, lamps, and other devices using oil for heating or lighting.

Farmer/Freeman: a person who tends the land, growing crops or raising animals, and providing a source of food. The difference between farmers and freemen is that farmers are allowed to use, but do not own, the land. They have much knowledge about

natural patterns and information about crops and animals. They also are usually self-sufficient and capable of defending themselves if needed.

Freebooter: one who plunders or pillages for a living, freebooters are similar to pirates or raiders but tend to not be associated with ships. Harming another to obtain loot is not always abhorred, though freebooters tend to avoid it when possible. Another definition of a freebooter would be adventurer.

Geiger/Musician: a musician is a person who plays an instrument of some sort while a geiger is person who specializes in the playing of stringed instruments such as harps and zithers. Musicians can read and write music, and they often have some singing ability, as well. Most do not create their own instruments, but they can usually keep them in good repair, readying and tuning those instruments of a similar nature.

Gob/Jack/Able Seaman: anyone who is given license to board a ship by the captain, and then is assigned a specific role other than boatswain or other standard ship office. They are usually skilled sailors or navigators, and they often endure harsh conditions.

Greensmith/Brownsmith/Coppersmith: a craftsperson in the trade of handling, crafting, etching, engraving, and using copper and similar alloys and metal in the making or repairing of articles, excluding coins.

Helmsman: a navigator of a naval vessel, often skilled in cartography and astronomy, responsible for ensuring the ship follows the fastest, safest, and most reliable route. Because of the nature of the occupation, a skilled helmsman recognizes the signs of an oncoming storm, well before anyone else except those using magical aids.

Herbalist/Spicer: herbalists deal in wholly natural, plant-based remedies and can produce semi-magical effects drawn from them, especially those pertaining to medicinal uses. Spicers are dealers in spices, such as pepper, salt, and other ingredients with a wide range of applications, such as preservation or obscuring flavor. Spicers are always trained in treating poisons, and they can recognize and identify plants readily, though very rare or obscure plants may prove challenging to them. Unlike similar occupations, an herbalist is often not considered on the edge of legality, except when dealing with distribution of controlled substances (poisons and narcotics).

Illuminator: a painter of books using expensive and difficult materials, such as gold, azurite, and their kin. Their artistry is very specialized and not easily duplicated, and the Castle Keeper may decide spellbooks must be illuminated books. Nearly every religious text will be illuminated.

Infantryman [Man-at-Arms/Heavy Infantry]: a lightly armed and armored combatant composing the bulk of an armed force, bearing any weapon of their choice and shield (nicknamed "sword and board") with whatever armor can be scrounged up, generally armor no better than chain mail. A man-at-arms, however, is a heavier unit, wearing much better armor and often having better equipment overall, and these units are usually better trained and are comprised of more skilled warriors.

Intelligencer/Spy: one who engages in gathering information by any means available, including reconnaissance and theft. Intelligencers often serve military purposes, but could be employed by a guild or a militia. It is dangerous to be recognized as an intelligencer, so they do not generally advertise their services. At worst, being a spy is treasonus, while at best it is illegal. The intelligencer is always disdained and mistrusted.

Ironmaster/Ironmonger: the producer of iron or steel used by others, such as a blacksmith. Members of this profession can make or break a settlement. They are often the wealthiest non-nobles in the area and some may even be members of the aristocracy, though such an occurrence should be an exception.

Jester: an entertainer who performs acts of buffoonery, juggling, acrobatics, and other clownish activities for the laughing pleasure of his audience. A jester is a common disguise for assassins desiring to get close to royalty, and so guardsmen greatly scrutinize jesters before allowing them admittance to perform. Otherwise, a jester generally has much information about his employers, even knowing many of their secrets.

Jobmaster/Caravan Guide: the person responsible for ensuring all gear, horses, livestock, feed, and other necessary items are obtained before embarking on an overland caravan journey. The jobmaster also navigates, leads, and protects those on the journey.

Lapidary/Jewelsmith: an expert in the identifying, cutting, engraving, and using of precious and semiprecious gems in a variety of applications but most often for construction and creation of jewelry.

Lederer/Leatherworker: a craftsperson trained in procuring, tanning, repairing, and crafting leather in all its forms, including the making of leather armor and waterproofing leather.

Mango/Slaver: generally an unskilled individual who captures, purchases, and sells others into servitude. Being a mango may be considered a legal profession, especially in a society with debtors' laws or an indentured apprenticeship schema. Typically, a mango will deal only with inventory of their race, but this is not an iron rule.

Merchant: anyone who sells, buys, and maintains an active inventory of goods. In many instances, appending "monger" to the type of product sold provides a title for the merchant; for example, a fishmonger would be a person who sells fish of various types. An innkeeper would also be considered a merchant, though what he sells is space and comfort.

Mintmaster: a legally authorized individual who strikes coins and produces currency at the behest of government authorities; mintmasters are highly skilled at identifying forgeries of their work. A mintmaster can also refer to a banker, currency

exchanger (accepting foreign money and providing comparable, at conversion rate, local funds), or an accountant.

Perchemear/Paper Maker: a person who produces paper, parchment, papyrus, and vellum. Perchemears usually also deal with ink, pens, and other necessary writing implements, and they can usually direct one to an amanuensis, illuminator, scribe, or archivist as needed.

Picklock: a skilled thief specializing in bypassing or removing mechanical locks, without resorting to acidic corrosion. Picklocks sometimes double as legal professionals, serving as locksmiths, making and distributing locks to customers.

Pickpocket: one who steals small valuables, such as gems or money purses, from others surreptitiously, generally amidst a crowd. Many pickpockets are very young or disheveled individuals who appear to be beggars. This occupation is nearly always considered illegal.

Point/Scout: the lead of a military or espionage activity whose task it is to gather information and relay it quickly without being spotted, caught, or killed. Points generally work alone or with a very small band. Most are trained within a specific type of terrain, and they have often served as dragomen.

Prostitute: someone who proffers sexual activity in exchange for money. Laws may inhibit or restrict prostitution in many different ways, including where the activity may occur, how the prostitute can advertise, or even the price of the transaction.

Rattlewatch/Militia: a member of a settlement who patrols and watches for signs of trouble, but is under orders of the bailiff not to engage the troublemakers unless in extreme duress. However, some militia are granted authority to apprehend or detain. In an emergency, the rattlewatch is expected to double as firefighters and infantrymen.

Redar/Dreamsmith: interpreters of dream symbolism, they forecast the future or recall the past for paying individuals.

Redsmith: a craftsperson who creates, repairs, engraves, and uses bronze and similar material for various applications.

Saboteur: a military or political activist who engages in functions which reduce the effectiveness of the opposition, ranging from covert destruction of siege engines to preparing propaganda and anything in between, such as arson. In a direct siege against a castle or structure, a saboteur would be undermining the foundation at the instruction of an artificer. Many are skilled members of the rogue class as presented in the **Players Handbook**.

Saddler: maker, repairer, and merchant for all equine-related items, specifically the saddle and riding gear, but also feed.

Safecracker: a professional specialized in the breaking-and-entering of highly secured areas. Combining both the talents of a burglar and those of a picklock, they are usually well-regarded within their organization. They usually have pick of whatever jobs they want to take, and, therefore, are not necessarily "for hire."

Sage: individuals known for their often unequalled expertise regarding a specific, narrowly defined knowledge set, such as plant life within a certain river delta or the history of a given dwarven clan. Based on their vast understanding of their selected field, a sage can predict trends and related events, or identify things which directly pertain to his focus. Very rarely, a sage expands his baseline to include all of a selected field, such as "all dwarven history" or "all magical theories," but these sagas are usually difficult to find.

Schrimpschonger/Elephant's Teeth Dealer/Ivory Carver: an artist who works in the medium of ivory or bone.

Scribe/Scrivener: one who copies or writes, especially as it pertains to judicial, religious, or governmental documents. To make a document official, it must often be sealed or signed by a scribe, effectively making the occupation a notary. Scribes also, unlike an amanuensis, translate documents into other languages, making scribes invaluable to an archivist.

Scryer/Diviner/Seer/Vizier: anyone using sundry means to foretell the future, such as casting lots or reading entrails, and most often possessing actual magical means. Diviners can locate and witness events as they transpire across a distance, such that the movement of an enemy could be watched. These individuals are nearly always under the direct employ of a government head or are leaders of religious institutions.

Silversmith: a crafter and repairer of objects made primarily of silver, such as goblets or silverware.

Soldier/Mercenary: a skilled military professional who is expected to provide his own gear and obey the commands of his employer, even unto death. For this loyalty, the soldier's price is often high, and refusal to pay brings retribution. The skill level of these soldiers varies widely. These individuals typically do not form a standing army, but may gather together in order to increase their appeal to an employer. Their ranks comprise members of all the warrior classes discussed in the **Players Handbook**.

Soper/Soap Boiler/Soap Maker: a maker and merchant of soap and related products, such as lye, who sometimes serve as launderers or rent out baths.

Taster: a professional tasked with sampling a meal, including beverages, before anyone else, especially royalty, ensuring it is not poisoned or inedible. Sometimes, tasters have a specific food they sample, such as wine or grapes, depending on their palate and sensitivity.

Taxman: a person whose duty it is to collect appropriate taxes on goods, services, and other legally decreed terms, such as entrance to a city or a license to use magic.

Tide Waiter/Inspector: one who inspects goods and people as they enter a city or town, generally from a port, but also by wagon or cart, ensuring no contraband is allowed in and that all applicable laws or safety measures are followed.

Turnkey/Jailer: a legally-bound individual responsible for the maintenance and care of those which have been imprisoned, whether for crime or debt. Many jailers function as torturers, as well, at least in societies where such acts are tolerated.

Varlet/Squire of the Body: someone who aids and assists a member of a warrior class, except the knight, with daily tasks. For example, obtaining space in a stable, helping with the donning of armor, or sparring as requested. A squire performs the same functions, but will only serve a knight.

Weatherspy: one who watches for changes in weather patterns and warns a settlement if disaster, such as a tornado or drought, is approaching.

Welter/Horseman/Cavalry/Knight: a mounted combatant often dressed in heavy armor and bearing a lance or horseman's weapon such as a flail or mace. Unlike the welter horseman, and cavalry, nearly all knights are members of the knight class as listed in **Players Handbook**.

Woodreeve/Ranger: a tender and protector of an area of land and its occupants; in a large settlement, such as a capital, rangers are also gardeners, hunters, and furriers. Nearly all are members of the ranger class as listed in the **Players Handbook**.

Zoographer/Breeder: a person who domesticates and breeds animals of any type, including livestock. Sometimes they attempt to cross breed related animals, occasionally producing offspring with desired traits, such as aggression or docility.

DEVELOPING THE ADHERENT

How much development an adherent requires determines his role in the game. The transient requires little or no development, whereas the permanent adherent requires more personality and background information. Preparing for these encounters is a good idea for the Castle Keeper. The more players interact with NPCs, the more questions they ask and the more information the Castle Keeper needs to keep on hand. Keeping good notes or investing in the **Player Character Reference Sheets** can prove invaluable.

Transient Adherent

These adherents require little or no work from the Castle Keeper beyond that outlined above in creating the adherent. Characters are likely to encounter them only once. There is little likelihood the transient NPC will need to make any specific attribute checks or dice rolls.

Example: Angrod the dwarf and his party have arrived in the village of Petersboro north of the Darkenfold Forest. They have recently battled with a band of orcs on the Downs, and Angrod has had a large gash cut into his leather cuirass. He needs his cuirass repaired, so he goes to the village tanner. While the tanner is working on the cuirass, Angrod asks him about the orcs in the area. Checking his notes, the Castle Keeper sees that the tanner's name is Luth Merridoos. He is friendly and welcoming, but he does not know much beyond his own day-to-day affairs. He supplies his name and remarks that he knows nothing of the orcs, but can tell Angrod about all manner of leather goods. The dwarf pays Luth's fee and moves on.

In this example, the Castle Keeper need not know much about the NPC beyond his name and profession.

Permanent Adherent

Permanent adherents require more time and development. A name, some background information, and a personality helps augment the continual encounters characters are likely to have with them. Encounters with permanent adherents are not likely to involve conflict, so the CK does not need to develop their attributes beyond what is outlined above in creating the adherent. **Table 4.27 Background** and **Table 4.29 Personality** below are useful in quickly generating a permanent adherent NPC.

Example: While Angrod visits the tanner, Merrick, a young 3rd-level paladin, visits the Temple of St. Luther to consult with the head of his Order. There, he meets the paladin Gilfalas, his senior by 10 years. Gilfalas has been in the service of St. Luther his entire life, joining the order at the age of 8 and serving a variety of paladins as he worked his way up the ranks. He is older, with gray hair and a short, well-groomed beard. His blue eyes are kindly, and his whole demeanor is one of calm patience. His large hands, however, denote one who has spent a lifetime wielding a sword, and his slightly bow-legged walk marks him as a horseman of old. Gilfalas is a very honest man and speaks in simple, short sentences without any pretense toward double talk, innuendo, or implications. He means what he says, and says what he means. He is a retired **14th level**, lawful good, human paladin with many campaigns under his belt. He has extensive knowledge of the surrounding countryside, and he is versed in the arcane, as his life's struggle against evil has forced him to know his enemy.

In this example, the Castle Keeper developed more than enough information to extensively role-play encounters with Gilfalas. Even though this NPC is obviously a class-based adherent, it is not necessary to fully flesh him out with attribute scores, hit points, and armor class, as the Castle Keeper does not intend for him to take an active role in the campaign, traveling with the characters and fighting at their side. If, in the future, Gilfalas was to take a more active role, fleshing him out with the necessary statistics would only be a matter of a few dice rolls.

The true value of adherents is, of course, their role in the game. Fleshing them out with a little personality, perhaps giving them an accent or some odd quirk, and role-playing them can bring a great deal of excitement to the game, and doing so truly engages the players. A well-played adherent, or any NPC for that matter, can bring as much enthusiasm to the game as a heart-pounding, edge-of-your-seat, everyone-is-going-to-die battle.

LOCATING ADHERENTS

Adherents comprise the vast majority of people occupying the cities, towns, villages, castles, and strongholds the player characters encounter. Finding specific adherents takes a little more time and effort. If Angrod is looking for a seer, he is not likely to find one in the village of Ends Meet with its population of a few hundred. However, the town of Petersboro has over 5000 people, and Angrod has a good chance of finding a seer in the town.

For the likelihood of locating adherents in any city or town, you must determine the economic tier of the region and that of the profession. Once this is accomplished, consult **Table 4.2 Locating Adherents**. There is almost no chance of locating adherents outside of urban areas unless they are part of a caravan or similar troop.

When using **Table 4.2 Locating Adherents**, you must first determine the challenge base of the profession as listed in **Table 4.1 Types of Adherents**. The challenge level is determined by the size of the community as reported in **Table 4.2 Locating Adherents**. Add the challenge level to the challenge base to determine the challenge class. Roll a d20; any number greater than the challenge class means the characters successfully locate the adherent in the community.

TABLE 4.2 LOCATING ADHERENTS

Habitation	Population	Challenge Level
Thorp	40	8
Hamlet	200	4
Village	500	2
Town	2000	-6
City	10000	-10
Metropolis	20000+	Automatic

Hiring Adherents

Adherents are not intended to be hired on a permanent basis. They may provide a service, such as the tanner did in the above example, i.e., repairing Angrod's cuirass, but once that service is complete, they are simply paid, and the CK moves the adventure on. When hiring an adherent to do a job, such as repairing armor, baking dry rations, healing, or any of the myriad tasks they do, the Castle Keeper should take into account both the difficulty of the task at hand and the time it is likely to take to complete the task. The costs can vary tremendously, but the simple chart below should serve as a good starting point for the costs of various services.

When hiring adherents to manufacture or repair goods, consult Table 4.3 Hiring Adherents. For most things, a Castle Keeper can simply assume the adherent is either skilled enough in whatever craft to create an item, or he has the right connections to obtain any item found in the **Players Handbook**, as logical for the storefront or shop. But, for special requests, such as a riding saddle for a giant frog, the "ordinary rules" become less than useful.

The CK can determine the adherent's general skill level and relevant cost as the adventure calls for it, or he may generate the information randomly on the table below.

TABLE 4.3 HIRING ADHERENTS

d20 Roll	Skill Level	Cost Factor
1-11	Proficient	—
12-14	Specialist	x 2
15-16	Professional	x 5
17-18	Expert	x 10
19	Master	x 25
20	Unequalled	x 50 +

Cost factor is a multiplier added to the cost of any item obtained from the merchant due to special requests. Use the price lists presented in the **Players Handbook** as a baseline for the cost of things. An unequalled crafter of an item is likely to add his or her own requests to the price, such as obtaining rare and obscure components, or performing some personal mission, or anything else the Castle Keeper can think of. The Castle Keeper is encouraged to use such instances as catalysts to adventure.

After determining the craftsman's skill level, the Castle Keeper then consults **Table 4.4 Construction Time** and decides on an amount of time required for the task, based on its difficulty, modified by the adherent's skill level. The minimum amount of time required is 1, regardless of adherent skill. In general, the more intricate and obscure, the more difficult it will be to craft. Other factors, like materials worked with, should also be taken into account. There is no way to completely codify this, so Castle Keepers must use their own judgment. Beyond this, other factors might come into play, such as economy, demand, availability, and so forth; use these to control and limit what is available in your game, providing the sense of detail needed for your campaign's flavor.

Items are defined as standard and non-standard items. The Castle Keeper alone determines if an item is standard or non-standard. Generally, standard items are common, everyday items, such as bedrolls, backpacks, ropes, etc. Non-standard items are more complex items such as a pulley.

Proficient adherents cannot produce non-standard items. They may know someone who has the talent, but they lack it themselves.

A specialist can create non-standard items, but cannot produce items of a "difficult" or "very difficult" nature. Roll on **Table 4.4 Construction Time** twice and add the results together to determine the amount of time required, then increase the time period by one category, i.e. hours become days, days become weeks, weeks become months, and months become years.

Like specialists, professional adherents can create any non-standard item as befitting their trade, but they cannot produce those of a "very difficult" nature. For professionals, roll on **Table 4.4** twice and add the results together to determine the amount of time required.

An expert is a capable craftsman, able to produce just about any appropriate item in the standard amount of time shown on **Table 4.4 Construction Time**. An item crafted by an expert is automatically an "expert item" but may not be suitable for enchantment. That depends on the nature of the raw goods provided to the creator for the process.

Master makers can create any item at a faster rate than expected. Roll on **Table 4.4 Construction Time** twice and subtract the results to determine the time required. However, remember that just because the merchant can have the item available, it doesn't mean it will be. Make your players sweat! Any item made by a master's hands is considered suitable for enchantment, and thus is automatically an expert item.

A person with unequalled skill can craft any item in far less time than expected. Roll on **Table 4.4 Construction Time** twice and subtract the results to determine the amount of time required, then decrease the time period by one category, i.e. months become weeks, weeks become days, days become hours, and hours become minutes. At the Castle Keeper's discretion however, the crafter is not required to produce the item in that time frame. Items constructed are always suitable for magical imbuement. Lastly, even when rushed (see below), the item maintains its craftsmanship. Typically, a tradesman of this level demands to work with the very best materials. For example, he may require adamantine or mithril for metalwork, platinum and diamonds for jewelry, or other exotic components. The requester provides all the item's components.

Addendum: If the Castle Keeper desires, an aged adherent can be decreased in skill level, each age category (middle-age, venerable, etc) shifting the skill level down one column so a specialist becomes a professional.

TABLE 4.4 CONSTRUCTION TIME

Difficulty	Time Required*
Routine	2d4
Complex	2d6
Difficult	2d4+4
Very Difficult	2d6+4

*Time required is a random amount of whatever unit is needed based on the type of item in question, as follows:

Light Armor (includes Shields) – Days

Medium Armor – Weeks

Heavy Armor – Months

Light Weapons (excluding arrows/bolts) – Days

Heavy Weapons (excluding siege engines) – Weeks

Arrows/Bolts – Hours

Siege Weapons – Months

Small Carpentry (canoe, desks, etc) – Days or Weeks (higher detail extends time period required)

Large Carpentry (ships, buildings, etc) – Weeks or months (size or difficulty increase needed time)

Small Masonry – Days or Weeks (higher detail extends time period required)

Large Masonry – Weeks or months (size or difficulty increase needed time)

Pottery – Days

Glassware – Days

Alchemical Items – Days or Weeks (Castle Keeper's choice)

Blacksmith Items (nails, horseshoes, etc) – Hours or Days (quantity determines)

Leather Goods – Days

Anything Else – Castle Keeper's discretion

Routine constructions are any normal item usually available in the store. It is either readily available in the game world, or it is found in the equipment lists of the **Players Handbook**.

Complex constructions are items that have been customized, but not to an abnormal degree. Resizing armor or reinforcing a bow would both be examples of a complex construction, as the resizing and reinforcing both modify the existing equipment.

Difficult constructions are items where the base nature has been dramatically altered, improved, or otherwise extensively modified. Examples would be armor that has less encumbrance or provides more protection, or a weapon that deals more damage. Such items are normally considered "expert items" due to their craftsmanship and skill level needed to manufacture. It is suggested that no bonus from crafting alone can exceed a +1 modifier to whichever statistic it is applied to, and then, only a single modifier is applied.

Very difficult constructions are similar to difficult, but border on the edge of needing magic to craft them. The modifications are not actually magical, but they are somewhat better than those possible with difficult items. Like difficult constructions, the bonus cannot exceed +1, but it can be applied to up to three statistics, e.g. attack bonus, AC, encumbrance, damage, or anything else appropriate to the item and its purpose.

If time is pressing, it is possible to rush an item's manufacture. When this is the case, the item is completed in half the expected time, but unless made by an Unequalled-level adherent, is reduced in craftsmanship by one step, e.g. from Expert to Professional. Furthermore, when rushed, the cost doubles, paid for in full, before the job begins. Ethical merchants will not sell substandard goods, but if they do, treat as an "inexpert item", where the item imparts a -1 modifier to the statistic or statistics it is applied to.

Supplying Adherents

There is never a need to supply the adherent with equipment, though the characters may have to provide materials, especially if they are rare. Additionally, any gifts given or extra money paid to the adherent may increase the value of his services.

Retaining an Adherent's Loyalty

An adherent's loyalty, if ever relevant, is situational, as he can only be loyal to a party that circumstances have forced him to join. Transient adherents have no loyalty rating of which to speak. If they have joined a party due to circumstances, their loyalty to the character or characters is completely dependent upon the charisma of the main character, and again, the circumstances. The character must make a successful charisma save in order to keep the adherents around. The check is adjusted by the challenge level of the situation as determined by the CK as well as the character's level and attribute bonus.

Example: A bloodthirsty horde of ungern soldiers is attacking a small village. The villagers gather in the Inn with Angrod and his companions. In these circumstances, they have become members of the party. Barren is a 4th-level knight with a charisma of 17, giving the knight a +2 bonus to his charisma check. When the ungern attack, the knight calls on the people of the village to hold fast. The Castle Keeper determines the situation is very dire as there are so many ungern attacking, giving the situation a challenge level of 5. Barren then must make a successful check. Charisma is a prime attribute for him, so his base chance to succeed is 12. After adding the challenge level, the CK determines that he needs a 17 to succeed at the check (CB 12 + CL 5 = CC 17). Barren has a +4 level bonus and a +2 attribute bonus for a grand total of +6. The player rolls a d20, and comes up with 10. Adding the +6 brings him to a 16. He fails his charisma check. The adherents refuse to serve the knight and, no doubt, mill about in confused mayhem.

It is important to note that although the character makes the necessary checks to determine the adherents' loyalty, the CK may want to keep the result secret, using descriptions to portray loyalty or parties breaking apart due to a failed check.

Morale-Reaction

Morale is a combat-based roll, a charisma check. Normally, adherents have no morale, and the rules need not apply, but as with loyalty above, circumstances may dictate the adherents' morale is affected. The character must make a successful charisma save in order to keep the adherents around. The check is adjusted by the challenge level of the situation, as determined by the Castle Keeper.

The following table gives the CK a set of simple situational guidelines and their respective CLs. The Castle Keeper should feel free to adjust these challenge levels as fits his game. In addition, the tables supplied below for a henchman's loyalty may come into play with the morale of an adherent (see **Tables 4.5 Situational Morale Modifiers for Adherents**).

TABLE 4.5 SITUATIONAL MORALE MODIFIERS FOR ADHERENTS

Situation	CL
Extreme, certain death or imprisonment	+10
Harsh, dangerous	+5
Venturesome, could end well, could end poorly	0
Easy, little or no risk and some reward	-5
Beneficial, no risk with certitude of great reward	-10

HENCHMAN

The henchman is a class-based NPC hired by the characters to augment a party, usually filling gaps. For instance, a party without a rogue may seek to hire a skilled rogue to locate any traps and open any locked doors they encounter in a dungeon; a party who has a cleric who does not practice healing spells may wish to hire a cleric who does, etc. Henchmen are used at all levels of play. They have highly variable loyalty and morale rates, depending on how they are treated and paid. They are expensive, as they are skilled warriors, wizards, clerics, etc.

CREATING THE HENCHMAN

Henchmen hold an unusual role in **Castles & Crusades**; once hired, they become part of any adventuring party and act as do characters in almost every circumstance. They have the same skill sets and are considered adventurers of one stripe or the other. Once a henchman is hired, the Castle Keeper should take a few minutes to create the henchman, using the standard method of character creation as described in the **Players Handbook**. Unlike all other NPCs, henchman have the same six attributes characters do, and their primary and secondary attributes are determined by the race and class needs as outlined in the **Players Handbook**.

Primary Attribute: The henchman gains primary attributes just as characters do. Demi-humans get two primary attributes, and humans receive three. The CK should determine which of the henchman's attributes are primary and secondary.

Hit Die: The henchman's Hit Dice is determined by his class. Refer to the relevant class, dual, or multi-class reference for the appropriate Hit Dice.

Alignment: The henchmen's alignment can be as varied as the player character's. To determine the alignment, consult **Table 4.28 Determining Alignment**. In some instances, the CK should choose the alignment, making it more compatible with the party's.

Weapons: Unless the adventure calls for it, most henchmen generally come unequipped. They have normal clothes, boots, and a belt. Wizards come with a spellbook and clerics their holy symbol. Other class-based henchmen travel with any tools necessary for their trade. The characters purchase everything else the henchman needs or the characters wish them to

possess. Castle Keepers, at their discretion, may provide high-level NPCs with a magic item or two.

Armor: Armor is restricted per the henchmen's class.

Abilities: The henchmen's abilities are utterly dependent upon his character class. A henchman has the same abilities as any player character of the same class.

DEVELOPING THE HENCHMAN

Once the CK rolls up the henchman, he should take time in fleshing him out, giving the henchman a name, a little background, and a few personality traits. There is a good chance the henchman has joined the party to stay, and if his loyalty and morale hold and he continues as an employee of the party, it behooves the CK to have a fleshed-out, believable NPC from the beginning.

Once the henchman is complete and the personality outlined, the henchman is ready to enter play. Generally, the Castle Keeper plays, or runs, the henchman. The CK should be very careful in running henchman, taking care not allow the henchman to dominate the party in decisions and actions. The henchman should always be second fiddle to even the most uninvolved of the players and characters. This caution goes beyond game mechanics. A henchman may be more powerful than individual characters, with better stats, high hit points, etc., but he should not take away game time from the players, as this will spoil everyone's fun.

Unlike other NPCs, the CK may allow players to play the henchman. In this instance, the Castle Keeper should run the henchman for a few sessions first, establishing him in the game. The player responsible for hiring the henchman then is then given the option to play him, with the caveat that he cannot do anything that needlessly or recklessly endangers the henchman. If anything like that occurs, the CK always reserves the right to remove the henchman from the player's responsibility.

Of all the NPCs, henchmen afford the CK the best opportunity to introduce new plot lines, story hooks, and adventures, and they serve as a conduit for information to the characters. By their nature, henchmen interact with the party on a deeper level than most other NPCs, and the enterprising CK should take advantage of this, building storylines into the henchman's background, and through these, introducing various hooks.

A note of caution is needed, however. Too often CKs fall into the trap of allowing the henchman to possess too much hidden knowledge, or to be more powerful than the party members, subconsciously interjecting themselves into the party as a defacto player. CKs already possess this knowledge as game masters, and using a henchman NPC in such a role means they come to dominate the players and other characters. This strips the game of any challenge, and it kills the fun. Castle Keepers should never let henchmen, or any NPC for that matter, dominate the inner workings of a party. CKs should never become members of the party through an NPC. The CK's place is behind the screen running the game, and if a CK feels the need to play a character, he should yield the chair!

LOCATING HENCHMEN

Henchmen reside in many different locations, which are only limited by the demands of the adventure or the Castle Keeper's discretion. They are commonly located and hired in towns, though it may fit in with the adventure's narrative to have characters meet and encounter them while on the road or in the midst of an adventure.

Note the mechanics determining where a henchman is or is not located and whether or not the party can actually encounter one stand secondary to the needs of the adventure, so the CK can use or ignore the rules as needed.

Example: A group of characters venturing to the Tower of Chaos, where the CK knows there are many locked doors is going to need a rogue. It may be that finding a rogue where the characters are isn't that likely. In such a case, the experienced Castle Keeper creates a believable reason for a rogue to be there so the group has a fighting chance of unlocking some of those doors. Otherwise, the characters and the players spend many hours of game time trying to open doors they can't open. If the adventure unfolds in this way, it is likely to end far quicker and with less satisfaction than the CK had hoped.

On the Road

Adjusting an adventure to allow the party a chance of finding a henchman is relatively easy. Even if the characters are in the wilderness, dice are not necessary. By taking a look at the adventure, the CK determines a good entry point for the NPC. Are the characters on the road? Encountering a wandering traveler in no way detracts from the game, and is not an unusual occurrence. Are the characters in a dungeon? Finding a man locked and chained to the wall fits the scheme of the game perfectly. It should not be as easy as a rogue spinning down the wall on a rope just when the character's need one. Rather, keep the encounter in the context of the game, making it believable and much more fun.

Note: In such an instance, if the party is in need of a particular type of henchman and the CK means to supply it, it is best to make the NPC have an alignment and personality compatible with the party's.

Example 1: Angrod and his crew left the town of Petersboro, supplied and equipped for another adventure. After several days of travel, they found an old castle, largely in ruins but overrun with goblins and their ilk. The goblins had recently captured a young elf, a rogue by the name of Publio. They tied the hapless fey to a tree outside the castle, serving as a warning to others. Publio hangs on the tree in immense pain, eyeballing a large hive of fire ants that have only now begun crawling in his direction. The party takes note of the elf's plight, rescues him, and revives him. They find he is a rogue of some skill, and they

offer him employment. With no better prospects and grateful for his rescue, Publio willingly accepts the offer and joins the party as their henchman. Terms, of course, must still be negotiated.

In the Town

The far more likely place to locate a henchman is in a town, castle, or city. Here there are likely to be scores of unemployed adventurers, mercenaries, rogues, and other similar types looking for work or some kind of prospect. Urban areas are far more likely to have henchmen available for hire than are rural areas, but even the smallest berg may have people looking for gainful and prosperous employment.

As noted above, the needs of the adventure should out-rank any mechanics of play. If the party needs a cleric, it might behoove the Castle Keeper to have one present when the adventurers begin looking for the henchman. However, if the party or game is in no need of a particular henchman, then the CK should leave the acquisition of a henchman up to chance. The following serves as a good guideline of what and who resides in any given locale. Any given locale can count on 1% of its population consisting of adventurers. If the place has 1000 people, then 10 of them are adventurers. To determine a particular henchman's class, roll a d20 and consult **Table 4.6 Henchman Class**.

TABLE 4.6 HENCHMAN CLASS

Class	d20
Fighter	1-3
Ranger	4-5
Rogue	6-7
Assassin	8
Barbarian	9
Wizard	10-12
Illusionist	13
Cleric	14-16
Druid	17
Knight	18
Paladin	19
Bard	20

Once the CK has determined the number of henchman available in the party's location and what they are, the characters must decide how they intend to find and connect with the henchman. Some type of meeting must be arranged, usually at a local tavern, inn, or eatery in which prospective henchmen can meet the party and "interview" for the job. The party must, during these meetings, determine if the henchman has the proper skills (class) and training (level) for the job and is at least moderately compatible with the party members.

There are several methods characters can pursue in locating prospective henchmen. Some are far more efficient than others, but they generally cost more money but yield more substantial results. It is entirely up to the Castle Keeper and the players as to how they go about finding prospective henchmen.

Whichever way the party uses to find a henchman—and there is no reason that they shouldn't try one or more or all simultaneously—the task of locating the employee should become part of the ongoing adventure. Role-playing the encounters can be fun and interesting, and for the clever CK, afford the perfect opportunity to introduce adventure hooks.

Word of Mouth: The party can set down stakes in a local tavern, guild house, or similar establishment and let the locals know they are in the market for a henchman, thereby getting the word out. This approach always takes time, days if not weeks, as news of this sort may spread quickly, or it may not. It also has the added problem of attracting more people than the characters are interested in hiring.

Posting: Through this method, the characters have placards, signs, or other notices drawn up and posted about the town or castle. Specific times and dates are set for meeting potential henchmen. The more information the characters provide on the notice, the narrower the chance of attracting potential miscreants or unqualified henchmen.

Crier: Criers reside in most any locale (see adherent above). These can be the loudmouth from the local tavern or the professional crier who hires himself out each day to stand upon busy market corners and shout out advertisements. This method can be particularly effective, as it is the method most commonly used by those in power to get the word out to the public on new laws, new dangers, or general news.

Agent: This method is only available in large towns. Agents are locals with connections and skills allowing them to locate potential henchman with the least amount of fuss. They tend to be more expensive, but the value of their services reflects in the almost negligible number of unqualified persons they send to the characters to interview.

Guild or Order: Characters who belong to a guild or order may utilize those organizations to find a desirable henchman. This method is often the most effective, yielding the party a henchman that is generally of the same alignment and disposition. Each guild house governs by its own rules, and some may require payment. The guild master may ask for donations, set the characters a task, or even give them a quest to repay the house for its services. On the other hand, some guilds may request nothing from the characters. Even characters who don't belong to a particular guild can utilize a guild to find employees. This is, in fact, one of the purposes of a guild.

Example 2: Angrod the dwarf is a member of the Cult of Swords, a loose order of warriors, mercenaries, and soldiers. In its ranks are fighters, knights, rangers, monks, and some ronin paladins. Angrod knows the guild well, and he understands they have no particular hierarchy other than that earned by reputation and prowess in battle. The guild does, however, put

up members in barracks, rented or purchased in various towns. One such barracks exists in Petersboro. Entering it, Angrod seeks the Master of Arms and requests the guild notify its members that he is interested in hiring a Shield Arm, a young soldier of fortune to serve him in battle. "I had a scrap with some orcs this past week, you see, and one took my helmet for an anvil and ruptured my eardrum. I'm not hearing so well, and I need a good man with a stout arm to watch my flank." The barracks has about 30 or 40 warrior types camped out in it, and the Master of Arms puts the word out in short order. Several join Angrod in the common room to hear what he has to offer. The Cult of Swords charges nothing for this service, as this is often how its members find gainful employment. Angrod, being wise, donates 10 gold pieces to the barracks' coffers, however. Of course, Angrod must vet the perspective henchmen for quality and competency.

Network: Most everyone has a network of relationships to call upon. In their hometowns or districts, these include family, friends of family, friends, and acquaintances. In regions where the character is less known, these networks might be understandably weaker, but include guilds, commonly encountered adherents, etc. Characters may actively attempt and the CK track such networks. It is reasonable to assume that the characters can fall back on these networks or utilize them to locate adventuresome spirits they can engage or attempt to engage as henchmen. The CK must assign a CL to this method of finding a henchman, basing it on the size of the network available. The more familiar the character is with the area, the lower the CL.

To determine the success of finding a henchman through any of these listed means, the character involved must make a charisma check, adding any attribute bonus, class level, and any other applicable modifiers due to magic or other means. If the characters utilize multiple methods of finding a henchman at the same time, they gain a +2 bonus on their check for each different method (i.e., one method +0, two methods +2, three methods +4, and four methods +6).

Their target number is the challenge base (determined by the character's charisma) plus the CL given in **Table 4.7 Methods of Finding a Henchman**. The challenge level is modified by the level of the prospective henchman; the higher the level, the rarer the henchman.

TABLE 4.7 METHODS OF FINDING A HENCHMAN

	Cost*	CL
Word	CK	8+level sought
Posting	10gp/week	5+level sought
Crier	1gp/day	3+level sought
Agent	5gp/day	2+level sought
Guild	see above	3+level sought
Network	CK	1-10+level sought

* Where the cost is marked CK, the CK must determine if this method costs anything at all.

HIRING A HENCHMAN

Henchmen are hired by an individual character, a group of characters acting as one, or one character chosen by the party. In the latter case, the henchman is loyal to the one who hired him, so long as there is no abuse or unnecessary risk. After locating the henchman, the characters must offer terms, and the henchman must agree to them.

To hire a henchman, the player must make a successful charisma check. The challenge class is equal to the challenge base plus the henchman's level. The player adds his level and attribute bonus to the roll, plus any miscellaneous applicable modifiers. The terms of the employment can modify the challenge class as can the character's level and attribute bonus. See **Table 4.9 - 4.14 Challenge Class Terms & Conditions**.

Terms include things such as upfront payments, expenses, goals, responsibilities, compatibility, and shares in treasure. Terms are vitally important in attracting henchmen, but also in keeping their loyalty rates high; the better the terms, the higher the henchman's loyalty rating. Below is a list of standard terms and some general guidelines on how to use them. It is important to note, however, that there are no hard-and-fast rules for executing terms. Each individual campaign is different, and the CK should adjust standard terms as fits each individual situation.

Standard Terms

Payments: Henchmen are people too, and few people join a dangerous enterprise without reasonable compensation. Hiring a henchman requires upfront payment. This payment is above and beyond whatever other terms the character offers, and the henchman immediately spends the money. In other words, the upfront money does not become part of the henchman's equipment. Assume the henchman uses the money to give to his family, settle debts, or to make mundane, non-adventuring purchases. The amount of this payment depends on the henchman's availability, skill set, and level. Fighters are more common than knights are, rogues are found on every street corner, but assassins are highly specialized and rare.

Above and beyond the upfront payment, henchmen require a monthly stipend and travel expenses (including food and lodging). The standard salary never exceeds the class' startup gold, and is generally 1/10th of the monthly wages; i.e., a 1st-level fighter would be paid 50 gp when hired and 10gp a month, a 1st-level wizard 15gp, and a 1st-level assassin 12gp and 5sp, etc.

The standard rates for hiring and monthly salary for a henchman:

TABLE 4.8 HENCHMAN STARTUP PAYMENT

Class	Start-up	Salary per Month
Fighter, Rogue, Barbarian, Bard, Ranger	50gp x level	10gp x level
Wizard, Illusionist, Monk, Paladin, Knight, Cleric	100gp x level	15gp x level
Assassin, Druid	125gp x level	12gp, 5sp x level

Expenses: Generally, henchmen require coverage of all their travel, lodging, and food expenses. Furthermore, henchmen don't come equipped with gear, weapons, or armor, and it is up the party to equip them. How a party intends to equip a henchman is a factor in whether the henchman takes the job or not. A fighter who is offered a suit of used leather and a dagger to defend himself is not going to be as inclined to join a party as the fighter who is promised a chain shirt, shield, helmet, sword, and backpack full of necessary supplies, such as food, bedrolls, tools, and the like. The more the characters offer the henchman, the more likely he is to take the job and join the party, serving the party loyally.

The standard expenses offered to henchman include food and drink, lodging, and enough equipment necessary to get through one solid adventure.

Equipping a henchman as well as the rest of the party is equipped is above the average, while equipping him with less than he needs to get by on is below the average.

Goals: The kinds of adventure the characters intend to hire the henchman for are very important. Long, dangerous adventures with a small chance of monetary return and a high probability of death are not very appealing and play against a henchman's desire to enlist. Though some may find the chance of death with no return exciting, the vast majority of people do not. Henchman do not necessarily shy away from long journeys or even long commitments, as these offer the opportunity for long-term employment, but there has to be some type of return for the henchman. Simple adventures involving dungeon crawls, looting ruins, or hunting monsters are typical scenarios no henchman would think twice about accepting. However, a goal set of attacking the Horned God in his towers of Aufstrag is not something many would be willing to sign up for.

What the characters intend and what they tell the prospective henchman can be two different things, though. Players should be cautioned against overwhelming henchman with too much information. How a henchman reacts to the goals is in many respects incumbent upon the CK, and the CK should keep the over all storyline of the game in mind when considering this.

The standard goals for hiring a henchman are continued employment and simple, non-epic quests.

Responsibilities: A clear definition of what the party requires of the prospective henchman certainly plays into whether the henchman takes the job or not. A rogue told that his job is to fight shoulder to shoulder with the party's fighters isn't likely to take the job. A fighter told that part of his tasks is to attack any magic-using creature isn't likely to join either. A promise of equal treatment and tasks centered on his skills is far more likely to engender a positive response from the prospective employee.

Standard responsibilities for any henchman may exceed their skill level and abilities. However, they should not demean the henchman either. Giving henchmen less than his is capable of is insulting, and giving him more than he can handle is dangerous.

Compatibility: Whether or not a party is compatible with the henchman in question is very important. Alignment and disposition play a great role in acceptance. Characters may desire to hire henchmen of differing alignments or personalities, but such henchmen are unlikely to desire to join such a party. The lawful good henchman is not likely to join a chaotic neutral party, as he knows that conflicts over the PCs' actions will arise. Conversely, a rogue of an altogether mean persuasion isn't likely to join a troop of wandering paladins on a holy crusade.

Also, how the characters react affects the overall desire of the henchman to take an offered job. By checking the henchman's personality traits already written up and comparing them with the party's known qualities, the CK can determine if there is any kind of compatibility. A fastidiously clean henchman who takes meticulous care of his equipment and person is less likely to join up with a crew of slovenly, lazy, tightwad, troll-like characters.

The standard compatibility is an alignment not more than two places removed and personality traits at least similar to the character doing the hiring.

Treasure: Appropriation of treasure is perhaps the most important thing that plays into hiring a henchman. A stingy party who expects the henchman to do an equal share of the work but offers little beyond a monthly stipend isn't likely to engage the interest of a prospective henchman as much as one offered a fair share of all the spoils, whether magic or mundane.

The standard treasure offered to henchman is 1/10th of the share of each of the party members with no magical treasure offered. Anything beyond this is exceptional, especially magic treasure. This latter has a value to henchmen above and beyond normal coin and jewels.

To determine the challenge level of whether or not the henchmen will take the offered job, consult the following tables:

TABLE 4.9 STARTING FEE

Start-up Money Paid	CL
Standard – ½	+2
Standard – ¼	+1
Standard	0
Standard + ¼	-1
Standard + ½	-2

TABLE 4.10 SUPPLIES/EXPENSES

Supplies/Expenses	CL
None at all	+5
Offers to purchase bare minimum, but no class-based equipment	+3
Offers to purchase basic equipment, some weapons	+1
Standard equipment, weapons, and travel gear	0
Weapons, travel gear, general equipment, and class-based items	-1
As above with magic item(s)	-3

TABLE 4.11 TREASURE

Start-up	CL
One-half of standard	+5
Keep what you kill	+2
Standard, no bonus treasure offered	+0
Bonus in extra gold, gems, and extraordinary items	-1
Bonus in extra monies as well as small magic items	-2
Equal share treasure as well as magic items	-3
Equal share, bonuses, and powerful magic items	-4

TABLE 4.12 GOALS & CHALLENGES

Type of Goal	CL
Little Reward with great danger	+5
Little Reward with little danger	+3
Some reward, some danger	+0
Great reward with great danger	-1
Great reward with little danger	-3

TABLE 4.13 RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities	CL
Always takes point, guard duty, scullery tasks, treated as servant or fodder	+5
Torch bearer, bulk of combat, character behind the henchman	+3
Guard duty, menial tasks, equal fighting with characters	0
Duties commensurate with skill level	-1
Equal treatment, never put forward unless necessary, character protects	-3

TABLE 4.14 COMPATIBILITY

Personality Traits/Differences	CL
Opposite alignment	+5
Alignment conflicts, such as NG and NE	+3
Neutral or indifferent traits	0
Similar in thought, alignment is close such as CG and LG	-1
Of like mind and alignment	-3

Of course, the Castle Keeper is the final arbiter of what is and isn't a decent term or condition. A lawful good party setting out to destroy the tower of the evil wizard Nulak may find a paladin willing to hire on for no pay or compensation.

Example: Merrick, our **3rd level** paladin, has spent several days in and around the Cult of Swords' guild house looking for perspective henchman. He at last settles on a few and agrees to interview them. The first, Horat, is a chaotic neutral, **3rd level,** human fighter. Merrick offers him 165gp startup money, 40gp a month, with all expenses, including armor and weapons paid. He offers him an equal share in the treasure with some bonuses if the situation should arise. The goals of the adventure are very dangerous. They are to set out and destroy an evil hag, but there is promise of at least some treasure. Merrick explains to Horat that he must take an equal time on guard duty like the rest of the party, and they expect him to take the forefront only in dire situations. The CK must now tally up the CL modifiers.

The startup money is above average, giving the CL a -1.

The expenses are standard, having no impact on the CL, +0.

Treasure is equal to all and is above average for another -3.

The goal is one of great risk with little reward ,+3.

The responsibilities equal to the skill level, -1.

No differences are apparent, so the compatibility does not affect the roll +0.

All told, the CL is -1, -3, +3 and -1, for a total of -2. The paladin has a charisma of 17, and it is his prime, making the challenge base 12; adding the challenge level of -2, the paladin must overcome a challenge class of 10. He rolls a 7 on a d20. His level and attribute bonus are added to his roll, +3 for the level and +2 for the attribute bonus. This brings his total score up to 12, exceeding the challenge class of 10. Horat agrees to join the party.

SUPPLYING HENCHMEN

Supplying a henchman is critical to his loyalty rating to the character or party. As mentioned earlier, it is standard practice that employers cover a henchman's lodging and normal travel expenses. These travel expenses include room and board at any inns or taverns, as well as any actual transportation costs. Common practice dictates employers supply their henchmen with proper gear. Supplies include equipment, such as bedrolls, clothing where necessary, food, and travel gear, such as backpacks, extra equipment like rope, armor, and weapons. Failure to do either of these things adequately affects the henchman's loyalty rating.

RETAINING A HENCHMAN'S LOYALTY

Loyalty is a fickle thing, and it is far easier to lose than it is to gain and maintain. A brief look at the tables above reveals how easy it is to lose that loyalty as well as how much must be done to preserve it or to raise it.

Check loyalty frequently. Doing a check before the beginning of each adventure is generally a good time, as it won't interrupt the flow of play and sets the CK up with a baseline loyalty from which to operate. As a rule of thumb, it is good to check loyalty whenever a large event occurs or after a long time (in game time) where events might seem to wear down a henchman. This should be done quickly, though, and not impede the adventure or encounter. It is ill-advised to lay out a huge encounter and suddenly announce a loyalty check. Though this may seem realistic, as the henchman looks at his odds for survival, that is not necessarily the case; henchman are stout adventurers in their own right. Furthermore, it tends to detract from the game at hand and irritate players to the point that they mistrust the entire henchman process.

During play, the CK should keep a running tally of the player's treatment of his henchman so he knows what the henchman's base loyalty is in case a dangerous or dramatic situation arises. Familiarizing one's self with the tables above is easy enough to do, and the CK should know if a henchman is paid a fair wage, carries a fair load, or does more work or takes more risks than the actual player characters. If a henchman's loyalty is low or high, it affects the way he reacts to extremely dangerous situations.

To maintain a henchman's loyalty, the player must make a successful charisma check. The challenge level is based upon the following factors: supplies/expenses, treasure paid, goals, responsibilities, compatibility, and the previous loyalty rating's CL. Consult the necessary tables above, as well as the **Loyalty Rating and Effect** table below to determine the appropriate CL. Once done, add the CL to the challenge base to determine the challenge class, the number the character must meet or exceed in order to retain the henchman's loyalty. The character adds his level and attribute bonus to the roll. For the results, consult **Table 4.15 Loyalty Rating and Effect**. The result will be equal to the minimum needed to make the check, or be less than or greater than. For any roll less than the minimum, refer to the appropriate line on the table below. For example, if a 14 was needed, and the result, after all adjustments, was 9, it reflects a negative -7-9 roll, and the henchman is aggrieved. The CL column reflects the number added to the roll based upon the last loyalty check.

TABLE 4.15 LOYALTY RATING AND EFFECT

Result	CL	Response of Henchman
Failed Check -10 +	CL 4	Despises character, will flee or attempt to kill him
Failed Check -7-9	CL 3	Aggrieved, resigns unless conditions immediately improve
Failed Check -4-6	CL 3	Indifferent, offers to resign, leaves in life-threatening danger
Failed Check -1-3	CL 2	Reluctant to help, slow to react
Needed to Make Check	CL 1	Reasonably satisfied, grumbles no more than a buck private
Made Check +1-3	CL 1	Works well with character, helpful, pushes his own limits
Made Check +4-6	CL -1	Very loyal, independently reactive, would not turn
Made Check +7-9	CL -2	Partisan, stalwart, loyal, serves with little question
Made Check +10+	CL -3	Extremely loyal, will sacrifice his own life to save the character

Example: Horat has worked with the party for some time. The adventures have been dangerous, and the reward has not been quite what he was promised, not due to the characters, but rather the actual treasure found. Also, the workload has increased due to a character's death. After several adventures, the CK decides it is time to check Horat's loyalty. The player running Merrick, the 3rd-level paladin, must make a charisma save to retain Horat's loyalty. The CK must determine the challenge class. The challenge base is as it was before, 12, because Merrick's charisma is a prime. The challenge level needs to be determined. By consulting the above charts, the CK arrives at the following:

The expenses are standard, having no impact on the CL, +0.

Treasure has been sparse, but the characters have not been stingy, +0.

The challenges have been ones of great risk, but with little reward, +3.

The responsibilities are increased, but the reward has not so +3.

No differences are apparent, so the compatibility does not affect the roll, so +0.

The previous loyalty check resulted in a +4, adding a -1 from the loyalty rating chart.

All told, the CL totals +5 (+3, +3, -1). The paladin has a charisma of 17, and it is his prime, making the challenge base 12; adding the CL of +5, the paladin must overcome a challenge class of 17. He rolls a 15 on a d20. His level and attribute bonus are added to his roll: +3 for the level and +2 for the attribute bonus. This brings his total score up to 20, exceeding the challenge class needed to retain Horat's loyalty. By referencing **Chart 4.15 Loyalty Rating Effect**, we see that Merrick's roll surpassed the needed number (17) by 3, meaning that Horat continues to work well with the character and will push himself to do better. The next loyalty check that Merrick must make will include the above factors as well as loyalty rating of CL 1.

Morale-Reaction

A henchman's morale is noticeably different from his loyalty. Whereas loyalty is a constant thing, morale is episodic. It is driven by the situation: extreme danger can cause even the most loyal to break, as their natural inclination to flee may override their sense of duty or friendship. Check a henchman's morale just before any huge battle begins or during a battle that grows increasingly dangerous. Also, check morale if and when any party members die. This can shake the henchman's morale tremendously, as the henchman sees certain doom looming. Any henchman regularly hitting a +7 or more loyalty rating never runs due to morale problems, unless the party itself falls apart or flees.

If the character who hired a henchman falls, that henchman does not immediately flee or run; however, a charisma check is required. The character who has the next highest charisma, or one who is close to the henchman, must make the necessary charisma save. The CK decides who makes the charisma save.

When the Castle Keeper determines it is necessary to make a morale check, the character must make a successful charisma save in order to keep the henchman's morale intact. The check is adjusted by the challenge level of the situation as determined by the Castle Keeper on the below table. Furthermore, the henchman's loyalty rating (see **Table 4.15** above) plays a role

by adding the CL from the previous loyalty check. Add the character's level and attribute bonus to the roll.

TABLE 4.16 SITUATIONAL MORALE MODIFIERS

Situation	CL
Extreme, certain death or imprisonment	+10
Harsh, dangerous	+5
Venturesome, could end well, could end poorly	0
Easy, little or no risk and some reward	-5
Beneficial, no risk with certitude of great reward	-10

If the henchman fails his morale roll, he breaks ranks and flees the area; if necessary, he discards his gear and weapons to get free, but attempts to keep himself together.

HIRELINGS

The hireling is a non-class-based NPC hired to serve characters in general or specific tasks. They are most often used at higher levels to populate strongholds and towers or to outfit large bodies of men for war. However, lower level characters may wish to hire their own hirelings for small tasks, such as torchbearer or porter. Hirelings are generally inexpensive, with shaky morale and loyalty. They include porters, guardsmen, men-at-arms, laborers, leather workers, teamsters, masons, etc.

CREATING THE HIRELING

Hirelings lie in a gray zone for the Castle Keeper. It is very possible the hireling will play a continuous role in a game of **C&C**. Characters may go back to the same hireling time and again, whether they need him to serve as a guard or craft their armor. The CK normally details the hireling as needed, expanding on him after play. In many respects, the material presented for adherents applies to the hireling.

Primary Attribute: Hirelings do not generally receive primary and secondary attributes; they make saves as do monsters. Saving throws are made in the same manner as for characters, but with broader descriptors. Each hireling is given either physical (P), mental (M), both (P+M), or none (N) as his saving throw category. The category roughly equates to primary or secondary attributes and thus the base number needed to make a saving throw. Physical attributes are strength, constitution, and dexterity. Mental attributes are intelligence, wisdom, and charisma. A hireling with a physical saving throw category makes all saving throws or checks dealing with strength, dexterity, or constitution at a challenge base of 12, and he makes all saving throws or checks dealing with intelligence, wisdom, or charisma at a challenge base of 18.

Hit Dice: Hirelings have hit dice commensurate to their task. The following table serves as a basic guideline for hirelings. The Class column refers to the BtH (base to hit) they use; it does not refer to their actual HD. A man-at-arms uses a fighter's BtH, and a scholar uses either a cleric's or wizard's. They can have multiple HD, as determined by the CK.

TABLE 4.17 HIRELINGS

Type	Class	Primes	HD	# of Weapons
Man-at-Arms/ Guardsman	fighter	P	d8	3
Scout/Archer	fighter/ranger	P	d6	2
Craftsman/Guildsman	none	N	d6	1
Sage/Astrologer	cl/dr/wi/ill	M	d4	1
Scholar/Vagrant	cl/dr/wi/ill	M	d4	1
Scribe/Notary	cl/dr/wi/ill	M	d4	1
Laborer/Porter	none	P	d4	1
Captain	fighter	P or M	d10	5
Advisor	by CK	M	d8	3

Alignment: Hireling alignments vary, but they are generally neutral.

Weapons: Weapon use varies among hirelings. Consult **Table 4.17 Hirelings** to determine how many weapons they can use.

Armor: Hirelings can wear any armor comensurate with class.

Abilities: Hirelings have very basic abilities based on the skill of their named profession, or the class with which they are similar. While the class determines the hireling's BtH, the hireling never receives the class' skills - or necessarily its actual HD. A 4th level Captain of the Guard will never have Combat Dominance, even though he has the BtH and hit points of a fighter. Consult **Table 4.17 Hirelings** to determine which class they resemble.

Note: Hirelings are distinctively different from adherents. Characters actively hire a guardsman to work for them. A guardsman characters encounter at the front gate is not a hireling, but is rather an adherent.

DEVELOPING HIRELINGS

A hireling's role in the game varies greatly. They are most commonly used in campaign-style games, as one-shot games do not generally call for this level of detail. The player character hires them, and as such, the CK can expect them to interact with the characters at some level. Different hirelings require different amounts of the Castle Keeper's attention. Common guardsmen are not likely to take a very large role in any ongoing campaign, whereas a Captain of the Guard will likely interact with the player characters consistently. A knight with a stronghold may need to hire an astrologer to offer him guidance. It is likely that this hireling will enter in and out of the game on a continuing basis.

In the case of a simple guardsman, scribe, or similar NPC, it is unnecessary to thoroughly flesh out the hireling. However,

in the case of a hireling who is likely to encounter the player characters frequently, the CK must take the time to complete the hireling as if he were a henchman or a permanent adherent. A name, description, some light background information, personality traits, and motivations are necessary components for such an NPC. Of course, like any good, constant NPC, the CK would do well to introduce some type of conflict with such a hireling, using him, at some point, to offer up adventure hooks.

The level of a hireling should be commensurate with the task at hand. A guardsman hired as a captain of 20 men-at-arms should be more than 1st level. Such a captain should be about 5th level. A good rule of thumb for the captain is, for every 5 men they command, they gain one level. Sages and astrologers offer a different challenge for the CK to create. These should not be wizards or clerics as described in the **Players Handbook**, but rather gifted men who posses some of the skills, magical and mundane, that wizards and clerics possess. They possess spell-like abilities, such as *greater scrying*. Some could be former wizards, however.

Example: After driving off the ungern, Barren, the **4th level** knight, decides to build a keep to protect the countryside. He decides to hire an astrologer first in order to gain the guidance he needs. He interviews several subjects, and finally settles on one, Lene of Fiume. Lene is a young astrologer but very intelligent and able. She accepts the young knight's offer of employment, and she serves him well. What Baren does not know is that Lene is a failed wizard. As a wizard of some means, she became embroiled in a battle with an androsphinx. The sphinx eventually defeated Lene, and took her mother and young sisters as hostage to keep the peace. It has always been Lene's desire to win back her family from the sphinx's tyranny, and she hopes to compel the young knight to aid her.

Hirelings can play as great or as small a role in the game as the CK wishes. They are perfect tools for adventures, information, or general encounters. The Castle Keeper should never shy away from using them to their full potential. They do not posses the downsides of henchman, as they are not active non-player characters, but only enter the game if and when the CK or players wish. Their long-standing interaction with the players allows the CK the greatest latitude in using them.

In this respect, whereas the henchman is a player's tool, the hireling is the Castle Keeper's tool.

LOCATING HIRELINGS

Hirelings are common, found in almost any locale of any size, as there are almost always individuals in need of work. Someone who hires on as a guardsman is assumed to be a burly, tough type with some skill with weapons. Such individuals are not uncommon in a fantasy world. The more specialized their skill, of course, the more difficult it is to find someone fitting the bill. If the players are looking for an astrologer, it is not likely that they are to find them in a small fishing village.

In finding hirelings, the players should take the same approach as finding an adherent; refer to **Table 4.1 Types of Adherents** and **Table 4.2 Locating Adherents**.

HIRING

As noted above, hirelings reside in most locations, and hiring them is simply a matter of locating them and offering them proper payment and terms. It is not necessary to go through the lengthy interview process henchmen endure, as hirelings are well-disposed toward accepting job offers. This is true only if the situation is within their normal job description. A man-at-arms is not going to hire on to be cannon fodder in some fool attempt to storm a dungeon of storm giants. Men-at-arms hire on to guard castles, serve in armies, and fight normal opponents, such as other men-at-arms, orcs, goblins, and the like.

TABLE 4.18 PAYMENT FOR HIRELINGS

Hireling	Pay/Month
Man-At-Arms/Guardsman	5gp
Pikeman	3gp
Light Horseman	5gp
Medium Horseman	7gp
Heavy Horseman	10gp
Mounted Knight	15gp
Horse Archer	8gp
Archer	3gp
Longbowman	4gp
Crossbowman	5gp
Craftsman/Guildsman	3gp
Scout	4gp
Siege Engineer	25gp
Sage/Astrologer	50gp
Scholar/Vagrant	5gp
Scribe/Notary	1gp
Laborer/Porter	1gp
Captain	25gp
Advisor	50gp

The characters determine the length of time they employ the hirelings; generally, a year's contract suffices to start. The PCs do not pay the money upfront, but they do cover the hireling's food and accommodations. A hireling expects to be provided lodging and board as a part of the acceptance terms of any employment contract. The PCs will also be expected to provide them equipment (see below).

SUPPLYING HIRELINGS

Hirelings do not normally come equipped. Even specialty hirelings require some outfitting. Though the hireling is not a pauper, the PC will need to equip him. The hireling, who may possess some job-related equipment, sets that aside in order to acquire new or better equipment from his employer. So, the player character must purchase any armor, weapons, spell components, or any other gear the hireling needs. Much like

with henchmen, how a character equips a hireling affects his loyalty and can affect his morale. Of course, and perhaps more importantly, it can affect his ability to do his job. For instance, an archer without a bow is fairly useless.

Castle Keepers should temper this rule with reason. A **12th level** paladin who hires an 8th level fighter may find the fighter owns a suit of magical armor and a magical battle axe. These items are carried by the hireling at all times, as it is natural to assume that he would use such items if necessary and bring them to the table once employed. Of course, the player is not required to buy the extras, but doing so goes far towards cementing the hireling's loyalty.

A hireling's needs exist for the duration of his contract, so the PC is responsible for supplying his ongoing equipment needs until the contract expires.

RETAINING A HIRELING'S LOYALTY

In order to determine a hirelings' loyalty, the Castle Keeper must understand the relationship they have with the players. If they are temporarily employed, treat them as adherents. If they are permanently employed, then another set of rules governs their loyalty.

For those temporarily employed, such as day laborers, it is almost never necessary to make a loyalty check, as they have no loyalty to the players at all. The hirelings immediately flee at any sign of danger.

The manner in which player characters treat permanently employed hirelings, including their pay and living conditions, affects their loyalty rating.

It is not necessary to check the loyalty of hirelings very frequently, assuming they are paid, fed, housed, and not abused. Such hirelings have a standard loyalty rating. If they are not paid or mistreated in any way, it impacts their loyalty to the player character. Make loyalty checks during situations of extreme danger, such as when a tower is attacked or a troop is waylaid by bandits, etc.

To determine a hireling's loyalty, the player character must make a successful charisma save in order to keep the hireling loyal. The check is adjusted by the challenge level of the situation, as determined by the Castle Keeper on **Table 4.19 - Table 4.21** below. Furthermore, the hireling's loyalty rating, as noted on the table below, affects the outcome.

TABLE 4.19 PAYMENT

Start-up	CL
Standard – ½	+5
Standard – ¼	+2
Standard	0
Standard + ¼	-1
Standard + ½	-2

*Standard is that reported on Table 4.18 Payment for Hirelings.

TABLE 4.20 CONDITIONS AND SUPPLIES

Supplies/Expenses	CL
None at all	+8
Offers to purchase bare minimum, but no class-based equipment	+5
Offers to purchase basic equipment, some weapons	+3
Standard equipment, weapons, and travel gear	0
Weapons, travel gear, general equipment, and class-based items	-1
As above with magic item(s)	-2

TABLE 4.21 RATING AND EFFECT

Result	CL	Hireling Response
Failed Check -10 +	CL 6	Betrays character, joins enemy, and/or flees*
Failed Check -7-9	CL 5	Flees at the first sign of danger, might betray
Failed Check -4-6	CL 5	Flees if battle is hard pressed
Failed Check -1-3	CL 4	Holds unless hard pressed, make second check
Made Check +0	CL 2	Holds
Made Check +1-3	CL 1	Sometimes helpful, will stand-fast
Made Check +4-6	CL-1	Will not flee, holds in battle, helpful
Made Check +7-9	CL-2	Supportive and willing to stand in battle
Made Check +10	CL-3	Very loyal, fights to near end

It is not necessary to maintain the detailed relationship between hirelings and characters as it is between henchman and characters, even though the relationship bears many similarities. Hirelings do not normally possess special relationships with player characters. If, in the course of play, they develop into more than simply paid hands, then the Castle Keeper should turn them into official henchman, following the appropriate rules for loyalty.

Morale-Reaction

As noted, morale is a combat-related roll. The reactions of hirelings differ markedly from any other NPC. Generally, hirelings are paid to serve a character. In that respect, they are often called upon to deal with danger and to at least stand with the character in times of duress. That understanding comes with the caveat that they are individuals who, in the end, unless their loyalty rating is extraordinarily high, are not going to risk their lives for a few coins, and few are going to die in a hopeless circumstance. That does not preclude them from bravery or selfless actions if their loyalty rating is high.

The character must make a successful charisma save in order to keep any hirelings around. Adjust the check by the challenge level of the situation, as determined by the Castle Keeper. As with other NPCs, the loyalty rating is going to affect a hireling's morale, as well. See **Table 4.22 Situational Morale** for the CL of the check, and adjust it by the attribute bonus, level, and loyalty rating as determined by **Table 4.21 Rating and Effect** accordingly.

TABLE 4.22 SITUATIONAL MORALE

Situation	CL
Extreme, certain death or imprisonment	+10
Harsh, dangerous	+5
Venturesome, could end well, could end poorly	0
Easy, little or no risk and some reward	-5
Beneficial, no risk with certitude of great reward	-10

A successful check means the hirelings remain at their post and continue with their ordered task. A failed check does not necessarily mean the hirelings flee in abject terror and quit the task or battle. A failed check may mean they withdraw or flee to a safer position. It all depends on the state of their morale.

TABLE 4.23 MORALE ROLL AND REACTION

Failed Roll	Response
0	They hold, but require a morale check again next round at CL 1
2-4	Any wounded flee, the rest stay but require a morale check next round at CL 2
4-7	Hirelings begin to run, breaking any formations, they can be regrouped with CL 5
8-16	Flee, falling rapidly back, refuse to be held or stopped
17+	They flee in abject terror, will not stop or respond to anything

CREATURES

This classification includes class-based and non-class-based monsters, deities, and magic items. Like adherents, they are part of the adventure itself, and the CK usually uses them to develop plot points or round out adventures. If properly used, creature NPCs can create truly memorable and vibrant games. The nature of their relationship ranges from helpful to neutral or antagonistic. The creature does not have to be an active participant in any ongoing game, though it certainly can be and often is. The creature NPC can also be something that passes into and out of a game in a single session. A magical mirror, for instance, possessed of intelligence and reason could fit this category. Characters encountering the mirror are likely to engage the mirror in some capacity. The CK can use creature NPCs at all levels of play.

CREATING THE CREATURE

The Castle Keeper needs to determine what type of creature or creatures the adventure calls for, whether a monster, item, or other NPC. It is best to reference the **Monsters & Treasure** book when creating monster or magic-item creatures. Deities are a little different in that the sheer power they possess and their abilities generally dwarf anything the player characters are likely to possess. However, as covered in *Of Gods & Monsters,* deities can appear in the adventure as avatars, and characters may be forced into encounters with them. Following the guidelines set down in those two books affords the CK the information needed to quickly understand a creature. If the CK wishes a quick, down-and-dirty approach to the creature, use the following guidelines.

Primary Attribute: Creatures do not generally receive primary and secondary attributes. Their saving throws are made in the same manner as those for player characters, but with broader descriptors. Each creature is given either physical (P), mental (M), both (P+M), or none (N) as its saving throw category. The category roughly equates to primary or secondary attributes and thus provides the base number needed to make a saving throw. Physical attributes are strength, constitution, and dexterity. Mental attributes are intelligence, wisdom, and charisma. A creature with a physical saving throw category makes all saving throws or checks dealing with strength, dexterity, or constitution with a challenge base of 12, and all saving throws or checks dealing with intelligence, wisdom, or charisma with a challenge base of 18.

Hit Die: Generally, creatures have a 1d8 HD, though Castle Keepers may want to change these according to size. For instance, tiny creatures would have 1d4, small 1d6, medium 1d8, large 1d10 and huge would have 1d12. Magic items possess standard hit points to which are added their hit dice.

TABLE 4.24 MAGIC ITEM HIT POINTS & HIT DICE

Item	Standard HP	HD
Weak	15	2d8
Average	25	4d8
Strong	50	8d8
Powerful	65	10d8
Extraordinarily Powerful	80	12d12

Deities' avatars HD and HP always equate to their class level.

Alignment: Creature alignments range from good to evil and chaotic to lawful. To determine a creature's alignment, roll on **Table 4.28 Determining Alignment**.

Weapons: Monsters use all manner of weapons, and some of them attack with their natural appendages, such as fists, claws, tail, or a bite. Some can use melee or missile weapons. Consult the **Monsters & Treasure** for reference material. Deities use the weapons of their class.

Abilities: A creature's abilities range widely. Consult the aforementioned texts for guidance. However, the abilities should not be constrained to those listed. If the situation calls for it or the CK desires to alter the creatures, the CK should feel free to do so. An item's abilities range just as widely; consult the charts in **Monsters & Treasure** to determine its abilities.

DEVELOPING

A creature's development depends upon how great a role it plays in the game. If the creature is designed as an evening's encounter, then the CK should focus his energies on creating a

lasting impression with the creature. This is best done through some type of personality trait. Having an unusual figure pass through an evening's encounter leaves a lasting impression every bit as much as a recurring non-player character who is fully developed with background and history. Unusual traits could range from talking too much for living creatures to an intelligent magic item having a jagged edge. Consult the personality chart for a working guideline.

Creatures with recurring roles require a little more in the way of development, as characters encountering them are very likely to ask them innumerable questions. This development can be done over time, as the creature reveals aspects of itself to the characters in successive adventures. This works for creatures who are antagonists or protagonists. Charting these many characteristics is a very good idea, as a character who encounters the Red Goblin might be confused if one week his cloak is red and the next it is green.

LOCATING CREATURES

Creatures reside everywhere, but are generally placed by the CK, and unless the adventure calls for it, there are no active rules that guide characters in finding a creature. Either they stumble on them, or the creature stumbles on the party.

HIRING CREATURES

Characters can hire creatures, specifically monsters, but this is rare, and the circumstances would be extreme and dictated by the adventure. In this case, the CK must first determine whether the creature is an adherent, hireling, or henchman. Whatever the case, refer to the appropriate section above and treat the creature as such. Hiring deities and magic items serves no purpose, as the first are far too powerful to loan themselves out for cash, and the latter have no reasonable placement in an employer-employee relationship.

SUPPLYING CREATURES

As with hiring, supplying creatures is problematic. Based on the type of creatures and the nature of the service required, the CK has to determine which chart best fits the situation. Characters who hire an androsphynx are probably not required to supply the creature with anything, unless a bit of food is the price. In this case, checking the equipment list for a one-time purchase is more than enough. Consult the supply section on henchman, hirelings, or adherents above.

RETAINING A CREATURE'S LOYALTY

A creature's loyalty depends upon its role in the game. In many cases, loyalty doesn't apply, as the creature is an antagonist and has connections with the player characters themselves aside from the desire to conquer them. If the creature is hired, the CK determines the loyalty based upon the nature of the employment, whether the creature is a henchman, hireling, or adherent. Consult the relevant charts above to determine loyalty.

Deities do not maintain any kind of loyalty to a party or character. Assume they *choose* to help the PCs, acting under their own esoteric motives.

Magic items are rarely hired, but they may have a loyalty to the character carrying them or even to the party carrying them. In this case, determine the item's loyalty by looking at the manner in which the character uses, stores, and treats the magic item. The magic item's alignment and any conflicting interests that may exist between character and item also affect it. An item's

loyalty is always rolled as if the item were a henchman, so CKs should refer to the appropriate henchmen loyalty tables.

To maintain an item's loyalty, the player character must make a successful charisma check. Base the challenge level upon the following factors: goals, responsibilities, compatibility, the previous loyalty rating's CL, as well as the will bonus of the item (see **Table 4.25 Magic Item Will Bonus**). Consult the necessary tables (whether henchman or hireling) as well as the **Table 4:15 Loyalty Rating and Effect** table (whether henchman or hireling) to determine the appropriate CL. Once done, add the CL to the challenge base to determine the challenge class, the number the character must meet or exceed on the roll in order to retain the item's loyalty.

TABLE 4.25 MAGIC ITEM WILL BONUS

Will	CL
17-18	+1
19-20	+2
21-22	+3
23-24	+4

Items remaining loyal continue to serve the character's interests. Items losing their loyalty act against their owners. For instance, a sword may slip out of the character's grasp. A ring may shrink, thereafter being too small to fit on the character's finger. The item withholds its abilities from the character, or it uses them against the character if possible.

Example: Angrod has broken his oath to pay back the weregild owed to the King for his own rescue. His axe, a dwarven-made Blood Axe, has found this action dishonorable. The dwarf must make a charisma save to keep the item's loyalty. The Castle Keeper must determine the challenge level of the item before making the roll. First, he must determine the challenge base. As Angrod's charisma is a non-prime attribute, the challenge base is 18. Now the CK must determine the challenge level. To do this, he adds the Will CL with the goals, responsibilities, compatibility, and the previous loyalty rating. The goals and responsibilities are generally on par with the item and do not help or penalize the roll. The compatibility has been generally very good, but in this case, there is a slight conflict, and it only reduces the CL by 1. No loyalty rating has ever been made, so that does not affect this roll. The axe has a will of 17. The Will of 17 rates a CL of +1, but this is canceled out by the similar nature of the axe and the dwarf. So the challenge level is 0. Angrod has a 15 charisma, giving him a +1. He is a **4th level** fighter, giving him a further +4. He has a total of +5 to his check. He must make a 13 or better to meet the 18 challenge class. The player rolls a 9, falling far short of his needed target. The axe's loyalty is lost to the character, and it begins to act against him. The CK penalizes the fighter with doubling his critical miss from a 1 to a 2. Angrod must earn the item's loyalty once more to overcome this rating. And the next roll will be made with an increased CL 3 because of its decreased loyalty rating (see **Table 4.15 Loyalty Rating and Effect**).

MORALE-REACTION

Monster creatures are the only creatures which need to roll morale. Morale does not affect deities and magic items. Monsters, however, can suffer from poor morale or good morale, whether they are antagonists or protagonists. Creatures serving as henchmen or hirelings and working with the characters can become demoralized and quit the characters' service or even be encouraged to remain longer or under more difficult circumstances. Creatures who are fighting the characters can suffer the same.

Make morale checks for creatures serving as henchman or hirelings more frequently than for other NPCs. Creatures possess a host of cultural, linguistic, religious, and racial attributes they do not share with players of any stripe. Thus, situations tend to affect them more dramatically. Roll morale during every combat, during any dangerous situation or one posing a threat to the creature's well being, and at the beginning and end of adventures.

To check a creature's morale, the character must make a successful charisma save to keep the creature from fleeing. Adjust the check by the challenge level of the situation, as determined by the Castle Keeper, as well as the loyalty rating, the character's level, and any attribute bonus.

TABLE 4.26 SITUATIONAL MORALE MODIFIERS

Situation	CL
Extreme, certain death or imprisonment	+10
Harsh, dangerous	+5
Venturesome, could end well, could end poorly	0
Easy, little or no risk and some reward	-5
Beneficial, no risk with certitude of great reward	-10

If the creatures are antagonists, refer to morale rules as set down under the **Castles & Crusades** Battle rules in **Chapter 11 - Going to War**.

BACKGROUND & PERSONALITY

The following tables allow the CK to create an NPC from scratch in a hurry. Each chart is self explanatory and should provide enough information to get the NPC started in the game. Roll a d20 and determine the results.

HOW TO USE THESE CHARTS

The **Table 4.27 Background Table** provides the NPC with the basic familial background. For instance, an equestrian background means the NPC came from a household of knights.

The **Table 4.28 Alignment Table** allows you to determine the alignment by rolling one d20. The table is weighted toward chaotic neutral and chaotic good, as the vast majority of games people play are designed with that alignment spread in mind.

The **Table 4.29 Personality Table** lists 20 different personality traits or types. Roll one d20 three times to determine an overall personality. If any randomly rolled trait seems to contradict with

another, such as being both boisterous and soft spoken, simply roll one trait again.

TABLE 4.27 BACKGROUND

Bureaucrat	1-2
Ruffian	3-4
Commoner	5-6
Tradesman	7-8
Wizard	9-10
Priest	11-12
Soldier	13-14
Equestrian	15-16
Lesser Noble	17-18
Greater Noble	19-20

TABLE 4.28 ALIGNMENT

Lawful Evil	1
Chaotic Evil	2-3
Neutral Evil	4-5
Neutral	6
Chaotic Neutral	7-11
Lawful Neutral	12
Neutral Good	13-14
Chaotic Good	15-19
Lawful Good	20

TABLE 4.29 PERSONALITY

Anxious	1
Shy	2
Fearful	3
Boisterous	4
Gruff	5
Rash	6
Temperamental	7
Trollish	8
Judgmental	9
Skeptic	10
Deliberative	11
Reliable	12
Soft Spoken	13
Thoughtful	14
Romantic	15
Courageous	16
Intuitive	17
Enthusiastic	18
Compassionate	19
Forgiving	20

HOW NOT TO USE NPCS

When properly used, NPCs add new dimensions to game play. Clever CKs quickly learn to use them to enhance role-playing: introducing, moving along, or concluding plot points; engaging sleepy players; building tension; and so forth. The list is almost limitless. When improperly used, however, the NPC can be detrimental to play, if not downright destructive. Abusing NPCs is an easy thing for the CK to do, even inadvertently, as they make NPCs too prevalent or non-existent.

Making NPCs too prevalent is the most destructive thing a CK can do in his game. This can play out in the power of the NPC or in the secret knowledge he brings to the game. Individual NPCs that are more powerful than any one character or whole parties, naturally assume a greater role in any conflict-oriented situation. Players who pull out their favorite characters and embark on an adventure aren't going to respond well to an NPC who steals the glory at every turn. The pitfalls of making an NPC too powerful are large but very avoidable. Whichever character is playing the same class or a similar class to the NPC quickly becomes marginalized in the face of more powerful NPC. This leads to the player becoming bored with his character and the game, something the CK wants to avoid at all costs.

When designing NPCs, the CK must keep game balance in mind. The NPC doesn't have to be dramatically weaker than any one player character, but he should be at least marginally weaker than any character of his class. This has to be mitigated with circumstance, as some parties may have very weak fighters, or none at all, and therefore need a strong fighter. In this case, consider designing the fighter with other shortcomings, perhaps a lesser intelligence or wisdom.

But as destructive as boring the player can be, the effect it has on the CK and on the game as a whole is even more destructive. The CK generally runs the NPC, though sometimes the players do, but, for the most part, the CK remains responsible for the way the NPC behaves. CKs already dominate the adventure path. They run all the monsters, adherents, hirelings, and other creatures. They are responsible for the descriptive text and all the outside information. Adding a powerful NPC to the mix makes the CK a defacto player, when he should be remaining behind the screen, allowing the players to play. This affects the entire party of players and their characters, for no one is going to want to sit down and listen to a CK drone on for hours as his NPC talks to his monster and listens to his descriptions.

Example: Angrod and Barren join up with their comrade Koetel to hire another cleric. Koetel is a **4th level** cleric who is powerful enough in his own right, but who focuses his spellcasting on combat- and magic-oriented spells. His lack of healing has Angrod concerned, as the dwarf suffers the most from the constant combats the party finds themselves embroiled in. After a lengthy search and several interviews, they find a worthy applicant. Hisldom is a **5th level** cleric who uses healing magic, and the two promptly hire him. The CK, hoping to make certain the major source of healing survives the campaign, supplies Hisldom with his own magic armor and a magic weapon. He

rolls an 18 for his wisdom and comes near to maxing out his hit points. As the adventure progresses, it becomes apparent that Hisldom can take more damage than Koetel, has a better AC, and does more damage in combat. Furthermore, Hisldom has a much greater spell capacity than Koetel, and he can cast almost as many combat-oriented spells as healing spells. As combats evolve, Hisldom takes front and center stage. The CK begins to enter in the player characters' action sequences as players ask the NPC for advice or assistance. Now the CK is playing both sides of the screen. By evening's end, everyone is wondering why they are keeping Koetel around, including the player who is playing him. But even more worrisome, they are getting bored as the NPC takes center stage. Fudging the dice rolls, knocking down his HPs or attributes, or even making him very focused on healing would make Hisldom, even if a level above the average party member, a far more acceptable member of the party.

NPCs can dominate a game in non-combat roles, as well. If in the above example, Hisldom is a bit weak but has all the answers to the characters' problems, then he quickly becomes a crutch for the CK and the players, who turn to the NPC anytime they have a moderately complex problem. It's like the old Life commercials, "Lets Ask Mikey." Such NPCs erode a game's foundation, as the players become disinterested in the plot or theme of the adventure, knowing all they have to do is ask Hisldom, and he'll have the answer. It further cripples the CK, as the game master doesn't need to invent new and exciting NPCs, as the players just rely on the one NPC. This further breaks down the fun in play, as characters meet fewer NPCs.

Castle Keepers have to take control of and manage the NPCs. When rolling up NPCs, do not hesitate to fudge the dice rolls to make them more appealing to the party. Make them weaker, less intelligent; give them personality traits that make them bumble about or something that reduces their role. There is no end to the things a CK can do to an NPC to make him have less luster than the characters.

In short, Castle Keepers should not be the game's heroes. Make sure the players' characters hold that role.

The other side of the coin is just as bad. NPCs that are so weak that they tend to become lost in the shuffle add nothing to the game. Players rapidly forget about them until its time to tick off rations spent or figure out who's on watch at the evening's camp. They become an irritant when conflict situations arise, and the party or the CK has to locate them on a battle map or for a spell's area of effect. Furthermore, if made to be simple shadows, they interfere with the game's mood, offering an unnecessary distraction.

BALANCE

Much like running monsters, encounters, or anything else in **Castle & Crusades**, running NPCs is a balancing act. It is important that the CK watch the characters and gauge what they need against what they have and what they are going to need. Design the NPCs in such a way as to make them memorable and interesting, but not overbearing. Designing simple personality traits is the best way to achieve this. These traits do not need to be complicated or so exhausting the CK can't maintain them from game to game. Couple this with attributes and hit points that run average for the party, and it is not hard to maintain a balance. For more information, see the **Table 4.27 Background** and **Table 4.29 Personality** tables above.

Example: Koetel is a **4th level** cleric. His comrades have charged him with hiring a henchman to augment the party's healing ability, as Koetel does not practice the arts of healing as frequently as the party needs. After sending out criers, he has reviewed several applicants and has chosen Wilth, a priest of Amenut, one of the Og-Aust, or the old gods. Wilth is also a 4th-level cleric, and he brings the necessary healing the party needs to the game. The CK rolls him up. His attributes come out to be 18, 17, 14, 11, 10, and 9. By taking charge of the rolls, the CK drops the 18 to 16, the 17 to 15, and raises the 10 to 11, and raises the 9 to 11, as well. The NPC becomes a little more balanced. Furthermore, to offset his level as an "equal" to Koetel, the CK chooses to make Wilth neutral, with a soft-spoken, shy, and contemplative personality. In this way, the cleric can assume his role as healer without interfering with the party too much. If a situation should arise in which the party needs a little clarity, the cleric's contemplative nature can be used to the CK's advantage, but because Wilth is shy, he will not likely offer up such information without being asked first.

CHARACTER AS HIRELINGS

Occasionally characters seek to put themselves in the position of hirelings, seeking employment from NPCs as caravan guards, bodyguards, adventurers, treasure hunters, etc. Situations like this offer the CK a host of golden opportunities to launch many different adventures. However, these situations can lead CKs to too much involvement in the player-side of the game, and even in the worst of circumstances, to the CK's NPC dominating the players on the battlefield.

When characters seek employment in this way, it is best if the CK make the NPC an adherent with no particular class or subset of skills that could compete with those of the characters. Unless the characters are guarding the NPC specifically, the NPC should not join the party or adventure with them. Hire the characters, give them directions, and provide information about payment, and then move out of the picture; let the characters adventure without undo CK interference.

It is also important to remember that very few players show up at the game to serve as an NPC. By taking these types of adventure routes and allowing the characters such employment, the CK has to take extra care in yielding some of the employer's commanding role to the players, allowing them to call some of the shots, if not all of them. Interacting with the NPCs will no doubt become strained at times, as the CK struggles with maintaining the NPC's credibility in the game and balancing that with the usually very strong personalities the players bring to the game.

THE
SCARLET
PILLOW

CHAPTER 5 – THE WORLD

THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE WORLD

CKs often overlook the nature or geography of the landscape in which they set their adventures. Yet, the terrain can actually play an essential role in setting the game's ambiance. Even more importantly, the land itself acts as a backdrop or stage upon which your game occurs. It is important and necessary to create a world grounded in the real or believable in order to accentuate the unusual and maintain that ever-important suspension of disbelief.

Geography is the cornerstone of your world. It is also a complex matter, and this chapter can only scratch the surface by offering brief descriptions of geographical features and how environmental systems interact. With this basic knowledge and adherence to the information presented below, CKs can create a very realistic world for their game.

On a world shaped like the Earth, water would have the tendency to flow toward the equator due to the world's rotation as well as it's gravity. However a multitude of conditions impact the water's actual flow, including but not limited to global temperature variations, suns, moons, and land forms. However it is safe to assume that generally rivers always flow downhill. Waterways encounter local landforms which cause them to flow in many directions. As such, factors like this bear careful consideration when designing and placing rivers within any campaign world.

If one spends much time outdoors, the apparent chaos of nature becomes organized, ordered, patterned, and even predictable. This is what one should strive to replicate in a world setting. If your world setting makes sense, then the magical, unusual, and fantastic nature of gaming becomes more believable, immersive, and real for the players.

So where does one begin describing the world? Well, at the beginning. The World of Adventure section is set up as a design process, allowing Castle Keepers to design their worlds from the bottom up. This chapter begins with the planetary cycle, moves to tectonic plates and crusts, and then to erosion. These three steps should supply Castle Keepers with the basic world structure within a short period of time. Focus then shifts to identifying and describing basic landform features so that CKs can appropriately place them in their world and give structure to the whole. After this, the chapter focuses on the planet's environment and biomes, allowing for proper and consistent development.

Castle Keepers should enforce, in all aspects, a sense of realism and logical consistency in their world so that the players never lose their suspension of disbelief, which is very necessary in good fantasy storytelling.

PLANETARY

Most worlds designed for role-playing games are similar to Earth in their makeup. Their design reflects a reality where physics, as we understand it, exists, and not alternate realities where there are no laws governing the order of things. For such worlds, the following structures do not necessarily apply, and CKs must rely upon their own devices and imaginings.

The world is round. The world spins on its axis once every 24 hours (23 hours and 56 minutes to be more accurate), resulting in a day. The planet revolves around a star. One or more moons may orbit the planet. All these things occur in a regular and predictable pattern which the CK must decide upon beforehand.

The length of year is how long, in days, it takes the planet to orbit the sun. For example, it takes the earth a little over 365 days to orbit the sun. Mars takes longer, and Venus less time to orbit the sun. The orbits are not perfect circles but ellipses. Earth and the other planets tilt as they spin on their axes. This tilt causes one portion of the planet's surface to face the star, while another does not. This tilt causes the seasons, and, as with other planetary matters, the seasons are rather predictable. The tilt also results in one portion of the planet being in summer and another in winter.

The seasons and the length of days are regular and predictable, and they should also be in the world designed for game purposes. Variations occur in the length of the day, year, and the seasons. As the designer, you can make days longer, shorter, or the same. The years and seasons can likewise be longer, shorter, or the same. Large variations from the earth-like scheme are entirely up to the CK, but it is not necessary to create a world dramatically different from earth. In fact, it is best to closely emulate the Earth. Dramatic changes in size, rotation, length of days, moons, etc. dramatically change growing seasons, weather patterns, other geographic structures, etc. A slight alteration of the earth's existing patterns is enough to indicate to the players they are playing is a different world without making the fantasy world an entirely different from their everyday world.

Design Your World

These are suggested lengths of time for days and years. As the Castle Keeper, however, feel free to extend or contract these lengths of time as much as possible.

Day length	22-26 hours
Year length	340-400 days

The sun, any moons orbiting the planet, and the stars scattered across the night's sky all play a role in developing the setting. These should, as with the rest of the world, be patterned and predictable. The stars and sun relay precise passages of time; they also assist in finding one's way and determining directions. Without them and their patterns, these things become difficult, if not impossible. If a completely random occurrence of your world comes into play, such as the sun randomly rising in the south and setting in the north, the entire ecology of the world falls apart, and directions become nigh on impossible to know.

In developing the world, be sure to place specific astrological markers in the sky, and have events based around them, as well. For example, the equivalent of the North Star (perhaps an east star or southeast star) or several stars which are fairly stationary help to solidify the world. Moons with names and whose states of exposure are associated with events on the planet all work to make the setting believable.

Tectonic Plates and Mountains

The planet's upper crust consists of plates floating upon a molten interior. The movement of the plates and their consequent collisions are responsible for many of the planet's major landforms. Although it is not necessary to map out tectonic plates and their movements, bear in mind that major landforms result from this and develop in understandable patterns.

When plates collide, they form mountains. When plates pull apart, they form trenches. Most trenches are underneath the ocean, whereas the mountains lie beneath the ocean and on the edges of those plates found above the ocean. These are active mountain chains which are still being created. The North American Cordillera and the Himalayas in Asia are examples of active mountain chains.

Inactive mountain chains are the result of colliding plates which have melded and ceased to be actively moving plates. Erosion begins to dominate the inactive mountain chains. The Urals and the Appalachians are inactive mountain chains whose landform creation is dominantly erosion-based.

Active mountain chains are replete with volcanic activity and earthquakes as the colliding plates jostle one another, shaking the earth; vents form which fill with the molten material found beneath the earth's crust, occasionally erupting onto the surface.

Essentially, two types of active mountain chains exist. There are collisions between two continental plates, and between continental and ocean plates.When two continents collide, they form fairly irregular and massive uplifts, such as the Himalayas, with narrow valleys and few, if any, upland plateau regions. When an oceanic plate collides with a continental plate, cordilleras form as the subduction zone moves further from the original point of collision. The mountain chains tend to form in parallel patterns, with broad highland plateaus forming between the chains such as that between the Rocky Mountain Chain and the Sierra Nevada's in the North American Cordillera.

In active mountain chains, the colliding edge region of the plates is active with volcanoes and earthquakes. These mountains are often characterized by extremely high mountain summits, steep slopes, narrow valleys, fast-flowing rivers with deep erosion-formed basins (like the Grand Canyon), and depending upon rock conditions, unusual rocky formations, such as buttes.

As one moves further from the continental collision zone, erosion becomes a dominant factor in the creation of landform features, and the earth settles such that volcanic activity decreases and earthquakes reduce in intensity and number.

Where continental plates diverge, great gorges form. Erosive processes dominate these landforms. When Amazonia split from Africa, a great trough formed between them, and the landforms became dominated by erosive processes, resulting in the relatively flat Amazon and East African regions.

When two oceanic plates collide, they form underwater mountain chains. These mountain chains are similar to those found above the ocean floor but undergo differing erosive processes. For example, there won't be river valley basins in underwater mountain chains. These mountain chains can reach great heights, rising above the ocean floor to become island chains such as Japan. These island chains are the tops of underwater mountains and are often associated with massive volcanoes, volcanic activity, and earthquakes. Islands occasionally form from parts of a continental plate that break off and drift some distance away from their parent, such as Madagascar on the eastern side of Africa. These islands do not have the volcanic activity and earthquakes of their volcanic cousins.

Many factors go into land formation. Localized uplifts, glaciers, weak crusts, folding and bending, and a host of other activities all affect the landscape's appearance. But continental drift explains many of the major features of the world.

DEVELOP YOUR WORLD

In designing your world, cut several sheets of paper into irregular patterns. These will represent plates floating atop the planet's surface. Decide which ones are oceanic plates and which are continental plates, or combine some. Move them around in a random pattern, such that they collide and move apart. As they collide, place a mountain chain, and as they diverge, make great troughs. Some will meld, and some will break apart again. Some of the continental plates, being weak and thin, actually dome up from pressure below, splitting into two or three parts.

Move the various pieces around to create mountain chains and oceans based upon the movements. Should you have specific ideas in mind for landforms, place them first, and then place your continental pieces around them until you have what you want. You may be surprised at the results, and many new ideas and formations will result from this. Doing this basic step provides the basic layout of your world.

ERODING YOUR WORLD

With the basic structure of your world in place, the next step deals with erosion and the single most important factor in tearing your world apart: water. On Earth, water covers 70% of the surface, and it is the most significant factor in eroding the landscape. Weather and chemical processes also affect erosion and landscape formation, but they pale in comparison to the effects of water.

Erosion begins with the process of weathering, where land structures are worn away and their chemical nature changed, usually breaking them into small pieces. Erosion is the movement of weathered material by water or weather.

Chemical Weathering

Chemical erosion results from natural acids produced by decaying animal and plant life, or from the combination of chemicals in the soils, water, and rocks of a region. Particular chemicals combine, producing acid reactions that erode land features. The opposite is also true, in that certain chemicals combine, creating new chemicals that are weaker than their predecessors. The resulting weakness causes land formations to break apart, crumble, and eventually dissolve.

Chemical erosion is a major cause of caves, both small and highly elaborate. Water sifting down through the earth mixes with minerals, resulting in those minerals' dissolution. As they are flushed away, they carve a cave in the space where the minerals resided.

Over time, chemical erosion affects whole regions, altering the landscape significantly.

Mechanical Weathering

The result of mechanical weathering is much the same as chemical weathering. With the rise and fall of temperature, chemicals in the ground and air, most notably water, expand and contract, causing natural fractures and breaks in the material, creating rocks. Over time, the rocks slowly dissolve into tiny fragments, creating soils.

Animals and plants also act as mechanical weathering factors. Animals dig and scrape at the land's surface, breaking apart rocks. Roots also dig out weak areas in the rocks, expanding as they grow to further push and pull areas until they crumble and break.

These factors lead to weak, substandard rock formations which water easily erodes.

Erosion

Water evaporates and condenses in the sky, resulting in clouds and thence thunderstorms. Most storms occur over major bodies of water, such as the ocean, but prevailing wind patterns move vapor around such that water condenses over land, as well. Thunderstorms and rainfall result, and water is dumped onto the land. Water collects and pools in basins or as snow or ice which percolates into the ground, where it is held as ground water. Much of the water, however, simply rolls off of the land into streams and rivers.

Much of the world's surface has permeable rock beneath it such that water soaking into the ground comes to reside underground in great aquifers or artesian wells. These aquifers and wells can, if filled to capacity or pressured correctly, push. the water up to the surface in weak spots or where holes are located in the surface, resulting in springs and artesian wells. These often flow and are of such great capacity that they feed major rivers. In some cases, there is not enough water or pressure to support rivers but only occasional springs. A great aquifer rests beneath

the Sahara desert, but it is not sufficiently filled, nor does it have enough pressure to cause it to rise to the surface. Another aquifer exists beneath London, and it is properly pressured and filled such that its outflow is a major contributor to the Thames River's volume.

Otherwise, water falls as precipitation. It remains as either snow or ice that melts seasonally or flows off the land. Rivers generally begin in massively uplifted areas, such as mountains, to small uplifts, such as hills. The water collects and flows downhill. Landforms, which cause it to turn or twist this way and that, interrupt a river's flow. But otherwise, it flows based upon its natural qualities of adherence.

Rivers begin in an area of headward erosion. These often originate on mountain slopes, hillsides, and at the high points or ends of valleys. They typically form as a three-sided basin with water flowing out one side. Rainwater and melt collect in these areas, eroding them fairly quickly in geologic terms, hundreds to thousands or even millions of years, and they flow downhill following the path of least resistance. Their course constantly gnaws at the land over which they flow, creating large basin-shaped areas over time.

There are cascading basins where the flow falls into one after another basin, or the water flow results in creeks, rivers and streams. These water courses cut down mountain sides in fairly straight patterns. Ancillary water courses feed them along the way such that they gain in volume and flow the longer the stream is. Rocks and seasonal flooding accelerate the process of erosion such that large V-shaped valleys develop throughout mountain ranges. These mountain water flows are characterized by rapids, small and large waterfalls, and deep, narrow valleys.

As the rivers flow onto more level land, their flow and nature change. In open expanses, such as prairies, they broaden and slow, unless fed by other water courses, such as feeder rivers. Eventually, they spill into the sea, where they often break apart in very low-lying areas. These delta regions become sodden swamp areas with vast amounts of water and wildlife; eventually the water spills into the ocean.

Climatic Erosion

Weather also erodes the world. Predictable weather patterns develop dependent upon the world's position in the solar landscape, as well as terrain features, both land and water. The complex system of weather that develops over time begins to batter the terrain, aiding the transport of weathered material.

Understanding the basics of your world's climate is an important factor in developing a fun, challenging, and believable world. The climate impacts the amount of water in any given region, which plays into weathering and erosion.

CLIMATE

In developing your world, or even your gaming area, it is important to understand the various biomes. Biomes consist of a climate, which dictates what type of flora (plant life) and fauna (animal life) thrive in that region. Climate is the characteristic weather conditions, including temperature, sunshine, cloud cover, humidity, prevailing winds, and precipitation of any given area. The climate determines what can and cannot grow or thrive in a region, which in turn, defines the biome. The following is a composite list of all the climates existing on our earth. Each entry includes average temperatures and rainfall. Picking a biome is critical in understanding what adventurers can and cannot encounter.

Note: It is also worth noting that magic changes the nature of what can exist in various climates. Magical creatures are usually not affected by weather or climatic conditions. CKs must refer to the various monster books or make their own determination concerning magical creatures present in a certain biome.

Tropical Moist Climates (Rainforest): Tropical moist climates are characterized by heavy rainfall in all months. Higher regional ground temperatures and humidity are the source for the daily formation of large cumulus clouds. Maritime regions that are subject to tropical air experience slightly greater rainfall averages and temperatures.

Average Annual Rainfall: 100 in. (250 cm)
Average Temperature: 80° (27°C)
Humidity: High
Example: Amazon and Congo Basin

Wet-Dry Tropical Climates (Savanna): Seasonal changes create wet and dry tropical air masses, creating extremes of both. Heavy and constant winds predominate in dry regions. The temperatures do not vary far from the average, but are generally cooler in the dry periods.

Average Annual Rainfall: 42 in. (106 cm)
Average Temperature: 78° (25°C)
Humidity: Low
Example: India, West Africa, Northern Australia

Dry Tropical Climate (Desert): Low-latitude deserts, which are generally close to the equator. They stand between windy regions and sub-tropical areas. Light winds move moisture from the area. These downward-flowing winds push air off the desert, causing very dry heat.

Average Annual Rainfall: 5 in. (13 cm)
Average Temperature: 62° (16°C)
Humidity: Low
Example: Southwestern United States

Dry Mid-Latitude Climates (Steppe): Grasslands dominate these semi-arid areas between tropical and high-humid zones. These regions lie deep inside continents, usually blocked from oceans by mountain ranges. Winters are very cold, as these same mountains trap polar air in the area.

Average Annual Rainfall: 4 in. (10 cm)
Average Temperature: 43° (6°C)
Humidity: Medium
Example: Great Plains, Ukrain

Mediterranean Climate (Chaparral): Seasonal differences are exasperated by continued sub-tropical highs and the equatorial, coastal location. These result in long, dry summers and cold, wet winters.

Average Annual Rainfall: 17 in. (43 cm)
Average Temperature: 47° (8°C)
Humidity: Medium
Example: Mediterranean

Dry Mid-Latitude Climates (Grasslands): Mountain ranges block oceanic air, allowing polar air to move in and remain over the lowlands for long periods. This trapped moisture creates large amounts of precipitation (frozen) in the winter months, but trends toward being dry during the summer months.

Average Annual Rainfall: 32 in. (81 cm)
Average Temperature: 56° (13°C)
Humidity: Medium
Example: Western North America

Moist Continental Climate (Deciduous Forest): An area where polar and tropical masses collide, allowing for very large seasonal differences in temperature and rainfall. Summers are generally hot, and winters are very cold; both seasons have heavy precipitation.

Average Annual Rainfall: 32 in. (81 cm)
Average Temperature: 56° (13°C)
Humidity: Medium
Example: Southern Canada, Japan, Southern and Central Europe

Boreal Forest Climate (Taiga): This climate has the largest temperature variance of any climatic zone. Cold polar air masses dominate most of the year, with light precipitation; summers are short, cool, and enjoy more annual rainfall.

Average Annual Rainfall: 12 in. (31 cm)
Average Temperature: 41° (5°C)
Humidity: High
Example: Central and Western Alaska, Yukon, Siberia

Tundra Climate (Tundra): Tundra exists in arctic coastal regions. Polar air predominates almost all year long, making winters long and cold. Short summers last only a few weeks. Oceanic winds maintain some semblance of temperature warmth.

Average Annual Rainfall: 8 in. (20 cm)
Average Temperature: -10° to 41° (-22°C to 6°C)
Humidity: Low
Example: Arctic North America, Northern Siberia

Highland Climate (Alpine): These regions are generally very cold or at least in the cooler temperature ranges. The higher the elevation, the colder the highland becomes, being closely related to the regional biome they are in, whether wet or dry.

Average Annual Rainfall: 9 in. (23 cm)
Average Temperature: -2° to 50° (-18°C to 10°C)
Humidity: Varies
Examples: Rocky Mountains, Himalayas, Mount Fuji

In creating your world or gaming region, it is best to stick with one of these familiar climates. Reference the listed examples to gain a better understanding of the landmark flora and fauna thriving in a familiar region. You should choose a climate within which to run your game rather than randomly generate it because, as mentioned above, deliberately choosing it allows you to research the climate beforehand to see what creatures would reside there. However, should you want to randomly select a climate for a particular region, consult **Table 5.1 Regional Climates**, rolling a d10 for the result.

TABLE 5.1 REGIONAL CLIMATES

Roll (1d10)	Climate
1	Tropical Moist Climates (Rainforest)
2	Wet-Dry Tropical Climates (Savanna)
3	Dry Tropical Climate (Desert)
4	Dry Mid-Latitude Climate (Steppe)
5	Mediterranean Climate (Chaparral)
6	Dry Mid-Latitude Climate (Grassland)
7	Moist Continental Climate (Deciduous Forest)
8	Boreal Forest Climate (Taiga)
9	Tundra Climate (Tundra)
10	Highland Climate (Alpine)

BIOMES

Each biome is a region or area with similar ecology, topography, and soil conditions, along with having the same plant and animal species. These biomes exist in certain climates. A world can have any number of biomes, and may have multiple numbers of the same biome. Read the entries and decide which biome best fits your gaming needs and your game's setting. **Table 5.1 Climates** mimics **Table 5.1 Biomes**, allowing the CK to randomly choose a biome for his game. Roll a percentile to determine the results.

Tropical and Sub-Tropical Broadleaf Forest: Heavy rainfall throughout the year typifies this biome. Lowland tropical regions can have as many as three canopies and remain green throughout the year. The forest floor is fairly dense, with vegetation in shallow soils. Deciduous tropical forests have several canopies and a drier winter during which some trees drop all or some of their leaves. Mountain tropical forests exist in higher elevations and usually have one canopy. This type of biome includes flooded forests in freshwater swampy areas. The average yearly temperature is fairly high in this region, as well, and the forests are generally located near an equatorial region. These forests are highly diverse in their plant and animal life.

Tropical and Sub-Tropical Dry Broadleaf Forest: These forests are similar to tropical and subtropical forests, and may even have greater amounts of rainfall, but have a long dry season during which all or many of the trees drop their leaves. This allows a very thick undergrowth development. The temperature remains fairly high in these regions. Evergreen trees can do well in well-watered portions of the forest. These forests tend to

support a larger range of mammalian species than do rainforests, but overall, they have a narrower range of both plant and animal species. These forests tend to border tropical forests.

Tropical and Sub-Tropical Coniferous Forest: This forest type receives lower rainfall than the above forests, and is generally located in higher elevations, but resides within the tropical temperature zone. Pine and oaks dominate the tropical and sub-tropical coniferous forest. The low rainfall does not support a large plant community as other tropical forests due to the low rainfall and poorly-developed plant communities on the ground. It is home to many unique animals which have adapted to local conditions. These forests have dry and wet seasons.

Temperate Broadleaf and Mixed Forests: These forests thrive in humid areas with an average temperature of 41-59°F (5-15°C) and 25-60 in. (64-152 cm.) of rain a year. In many of the forests, there is a dry and wet season, but this is not necessary to the forest. These forests have a vast altitude range, as well. The forest has four canopies with mature trees taking the uppermost layer; immature trees, shrubs, and the ground cover comprise the remaining levels. Oaks, beeches, maples, spruces, and firs dominate this forest. These forests also support a wide variety of animal life.

Temperate Coniferous Forests: These forests have high rainfall and moderate to low annual temperature with a dry and wet season. These are rare forests that support massive trees, such as redwoods and sequoias, and have an understory of mosses and ferns. These forests also support a wide range of animal life and unique plant life.

Taiga: This is a harsh environment characterized by a wide summer to winter temperature variation averaging 75°F (24°C) and low precipitation with a dry and wet season. Much of the precipitation occurs as snowfall. Winter lasts 5-6 months out of the year, and the summers are short, humid, and hot, about 85°F (29°C) at its highest. The forests are densely spaced except in the northern portions where the trees are more spread out, and consist primarily of larch, spruce, fir, and pine trees with moss and lichen undergrowth on the ground. The thin soils make for both shallow-rooting and smaller trees. Some deciduous trees also survive in these harsh conditions, such as willow, aspen, and birch. These forests do not support a wide variety of animal and plant life. They contain a large number of mammalian species, though. Many of the biome's larger carnivores hibernate because food supplies are not plentiful during winter.

Tropical and Subtropical Grasslands, Savannas, and Shrublands: Semi-arid to semi-humid regions with moderate to high-average temperatures and 20-60 inches (51-152 centimeters) of rainfall a year typify these biomes. Grasses with scattered trees or small shrubs dominate the areas. These zones can be fairly widespread and cover vast areas. Rainy seasons can be as short as a few weeks, and in other cases, have low rainfalls year round. The regions support a small range of flora and fauna (though widely divergent from region to region), and they are home to large herds of herbivores.

Temperate Grasslands, Savannas, and Shrublands: These areas lie further from the equatorial regions than do the tropical and subtropical zones, and they experience freezing weather during winter and high temperatures during summer. Low grasses and shrubs (steppes) to high grasses and shrubs (prairies) dominate these regions. The soils are generally fairly rich, and while they do support trees, the tree growth is not so thick as to form a canopy. These regions are home to large species of grazing animals. They are also some of the most agriculturally productive biomes.

Flooded Grasslands and Savannas: These grasslands flood seasonally. They have rich soils, are very wet, and are generally found closer to the world's tropical regions. They support a wide variety of grasses, shrubs, and herbaceous plants but fewer trees than other grasslands. They are home to a variety of waterfowl, crocodiles, amphibians, and other smaller animals.

Montane Grasslands and Shrublands: This zone refers to high-altitude grasslands and shrublands located above the tree line. The regions are home to many unique and divergent plant and animal species. The montane grasslands and shrublands are similar to islands in flora and fauna development, as each tends to develop without influence from other biomes. These areas are humid with low annual temperatures, lengthy winters, and cool summers.

Tundra: This biome experiences low annual temperatures, and has short growing seasons with soils which remain frozen all-year round or nearly so. The regions are stark and barren, supporting little tree growth. Sedges, mosses, lichen, shrubs, and some grasses grow here. The region is usually very windy and arid. However, during the summer melt, the soils become soggy and moist, as the water contained in them melts. Few animal species thrive in this region.

Mediterranean Forests, Woodlands, and Scrub: This is a temperate zone typified by hot, dry summers and mild, rainy winters. These regions contain a vast array of subzones and mosaic ecosystems, from thick forests to open savanna/shrubland, experiencing great variation in short amounts of space. Both coniferous and deciduous forests thrive in this zone. Fires also regularly occur in this biome. The biome supports a wide variety of plant and animal life, with many species being specific to one area.

Oceanic Islands: These islands can appear anywhere there is activity to produce them, and the climate where the islands reside determines their flora and fauna. There is usually an abundance of bird life, wild fishes, migratory marine mammals, and reptiles.

Deserts and Xeric Shrubland: These are arid zones receiving fewer than 10 inches (25 centimeters) of rainfall a year. The soils are rocky and poor, and they do not support a wide variety of plant or animal life; many of the animals residing in this biome are nocturnal. These regions include those areas of vast sand dunes to sparse grasslands.

Mangrove: These are coastal regions with shrubs and trees growing in flooded, salty swamps and sandy soils. The plants tend to grow in densely packed groves with extensive root systems. There is a wide variety of plant and animal species found in the areas. They typically thrive in tropical and subtropical areas, though they can exist in warmer temperate zones.

Freshwater Biomes

Lake: Lakes are large bodies of water found inland, in mountainous regions, rift zones, and in recently glaciated areas; one or more rivers feed them. Some lakes have a natural outflow, while others lose water only to evaporation.

River Delta: This is a landform resulting from the deposition of soils from rivers as they empty into the ocean. These are generally large, fan-shaped, level areas of significant sediment buildup and many small rivers and channels carrying the river water out to the ocean. Deltas are often subject to seasonal flooding.

Freshwater: These biomes refer to streams, ponds, bogs, and rivers fed by underground aquifers, rainwater, or snowmelt/ice melt. There are generally two types of freshwater systems: flowing and stagnant.

Wetlands: These are areas in which the soil is saturated seasonally or year round, such as marshes, bogs, and swamps. One of the most biologically diverse zones on the earth's surface, they support a wide variety of both plant and animal life.

Endorheic Basins: These basins are deep rifts accumulating water from streams or rivers and have no visible runoff; the water usually drains in underwater channels. These basins are common in all climates; the types and amount of fauna and flora are dependent upon where they lie in the world setting.

Underground Biomes

Caves: These are isolated, shallow openings in the earth. They are usually barren of any life except surface species living in or near the mouths of these caves. Unique plant and animal species can be found in these caves.

Deep caves: These caves extend deep under the earth. Their upper portions support an abundance of lichen, mosses and small growth. There are large, cavernous areas connected by small chutes and tunnels. They are well-watered. The lower areas are inhabited by an array of unique plant species, but they are very sparse.

Dismal Deeps: These areas have no real-world equivalent. However, in the fantastical realms, there are worlds beneath ours with ecosystems all their own. They are typified by massive caverns and cavern complexes joined by narrow chutes and tunnels. These humid environments have consistent temperatures except when near volcanic activity. Cavern complexes have unique plant and animal species found in small enclosed zones with some few species varying over extensive periods. Vegetation is sparse, generally low growing and found in large communities. Plants and animals tend to respond to heat, movement, sound, and smell more than sight. Some areas are well-watered, while others are not.

TABLE 5.2 BIOMES

Roll (2d12)	Biome
1-4	Tropical and Sub-Tropical Broadleaf Forest
5-8	Tropical and Sub-Tropical Dry Broadleaf Forest
9-12	Tropical and Sub-Tropical Coniferous Forest
13-16	Temperate Broadleaf and Mixed Forests
17-21	Temperate Coniferous Forests
22-25	Taiga
25-29	Tropical and Subtropical Grasslands, Savannas, and Shrublands
30-34	Temperate Grasslands, Savannas, and Shrublands
35-38	Flooded Grasslands and Savannas
39-42	Montane Grasslands and Shrublands
43-47	Tundra
48-51	Mediterranean Forests, Woodlands, and Scrub
52-55	Deserts and Xeric Shrubland
56-59	Mangrove
60-63	Lake
64-67	River Delta
68-71	Freshwater
72-75	Wetlands
76-79	Oceanic Islands
80-83	Endorheic Basins
84-89	Caves
90-93	Deep Caves
93-100	Dismal Deeps

TERRAIN

Every biome consists of a vast array of terrain, the features of the land, including bodies of water. There are many types of terrain features that describe particular aspects of an area. Castle Keepers should always use descriptive words when describing the terrain PCs are travelling over, as it helps conjure images of the world in the players' minds, making the game more vibrant and fun, as shown in Example 2. Terrain goes far beyond the biome and climate and into the interactive area of the game where the imagery is all important and descriptions can make or break a mood.

Example 1: The party climbs over the rocks and looks north to the castle keep.

Example 2: You pull yourself up over the crag to find yourself standing on a narrow escarpment. You follow the escarpment around to a large outcrop resting comfortably beneath the peak of the ridge. Climbing it, you see a broad expanse of tundra

before you, beyond which lies another range of hills and one large dome mountain. Upon its peak stand the towers of the castle keep.

Below is a short list of terrain features.

Deserts

Deserts are regions receiving very little annual precipitation, usually less than 10 inches (25 centimeters) a year. Deserts have specialized flora and fauna, and they lie in both cold and hot climates. This former point is important to understand, as deserts can exist in arctic environments.

Coastal: Deserts along coasts that generally have long, cool summers and longer winters. Their proximity to the salt-water ocean or sea allows for moderate salt buildup in the soil, therefore reducing the chances of vegetation thriving.

Cold: These deserts experience long winters and short, very cool summers. Their low temperatures are conducive to permafrost forming in the soil and less melt from the fallen snow, leaving accumulated buildup over long periods.

Hot and Dry: The most common type of desert and often the largest, these deserts are always warm, even in winter, and have very little precipitation. Vegetation is small, ground-hugging shrubs and bushes.

Rain Shadows: These regions are created along the basin in of mountains that stop the inward flow of moisture-bearing clouds. The windward side of the mountains receives plenty of yearly precipitation, but the leeward side receives very little.

Salt Flats: Formed from an evaporated body of salt water, the soil of a flat is very salty, with sparse flora and little fauna.

Semi-Arid: These deserts have long, dry summers, but with short winters with more precipitation. This allows for a wider variety of underbrush to grow which in turn supports a great variety of fauna.

Forests

There are many types of forested areas, from small hardwood copses to continent-wide boreal forests and vast tropical rainforests, such as the Amazon. Each type of forest has its own environmental conditions allowing it to grow, as well as its own particular history. A broad-stroke description of several forest types is provided below. From this, Castle Keepers should be able to place appropriate tree types in their regions and more uniformly construct their world. A forest glossary also follows.

Northern Coniferous Forests (Boreal): These forests are found in northern latitudes and in high upland mountainous regions. They are dominated by firs and spruces in their northern regions, while pines and larches dominate their southern fringes. They are often associated with once-glaciated regions, and they receive a lot of yearly snowfall and have low winter temperatures. The upland or mountainous forest of this nature has the same cold and snow conditions. These trees in these forests are often stunted and small, bushy affairs compared to their lowland counterparts. Deciduous trees can be found in these forests, but they are rare and are more likely found in the southern regions or at lower elevations.

Southern Coniferous Forests: These forests are found in southern latitudes. They are generally more constrained by their environment than their northern counterparts, as other tree types are far better acclimated to the long growing seasons and mild winters and summers. They are dominated by tall pines with high canopies or low, small spruces which grow in soils or rocky outcrops unsuitable to other trees.

Deciduous Temperate Forests: These forests are found in areas of moderate climatic conditions. Cold winters and warm summers prevail, but temperatures do not consistently drop below 0°F (-18°C) or above 100°F (38°C) for extended periods of time. Seasonal changes predominate, with the deciduous trees loosing their leaves in fall and growing back in the spring. Trees typical to this clime are ash, birch, oak, willows, and the like. These forests are often intermixed with evergreen trees, such as cedar and southern pines.

Copse: These small woodlands have moderate to dense undergrowth, such as those areas near creek beds or bodies of water.

Grove: A grove is a small woodland area with little or no undergrowth which can exist in larger forests or stand by itself in the open country. Groves usually exist near water or in areas receiving sufficient annual precipitation.

Forest: An extensive area of land covered in trees. A forest usually consists of mixed tree species due to the proximity to water and the overall agreeable climate. The trees usually grow in dense patterns, choking out most undergrowth. A forest almost always consists of older-growth tree stands.

Jungle: A forest growing in the tropics, which consists of flora that thrives in hot and humid climates.

Orchard: An artificially planted grove of trees, usually containing fruit- or nut-bearing trees.

Stand: A small group of similar trees; a stand is almost always in a larger growth of trees like a forest or grove.

Timberland: An area marked or purposely grown for the cultivation of timber.

Wood: A moderately large area of trees with moderate to dense undergrowth. Like the grove, the wood can exist in larger forests, and usually borders some terrain feature allowing for variations in the patterns of undergrowth.

Depressions

A depression, or sinkhole, is a low point in the ground surrounded on all sides by the land around it. These sinkholes occur in every

clime and biome and within any terrain. Depressions can occur in ice sheets, prairies, mountainsides, underwater, etc.

Arroyo: A large gully created by coursing water, usually caused by flash flooding in deserts or environments experiencing sudden downpours. An arroyo is usually a fairly shallow gully.

Canyon: A cleft in the ground with very steep sides. Canyons are the result of tectonic shifts or water runoff in soft-rock areas. They can exist in almost any terrain, though are predominantly restricted to mountains and hills.

Basin: A concave area in the earth caused by weak or shallow ground surface usually as the result of water runoff. The area around the basin is higher than the basin's lowest point.

Chasm: A deep cut in the ground caused by water erosion or tectonic activity. The chasm is different from other depressions by the steep nature of its sides. Chasms can exist in most terrain.

Dale: A dale is another word for valley. It is usually associated with low valley sides, lush growth, and plenty of water.

Dry Wash: Any water course that is dry. It may be dry due to seasonal climate changes, or permanently dry due to changes in the landscape or precipitation. Dry washes often exist in arroyos, and if seasonal, they can suffer from sudden flash floods.

Gap: A low area in a hill, ridge, or mountain. A gap often serves as a pass for travelers.

Glen: These secluded valleys lie in the deep mountains, and are usually difficult to access.

Gorge: A narrow passage cut into a mountain or cliff characterized by very steep cliff sides. A swift-running stream that may or may not run year round cuts the gorge as it travels across the terrain's surface, eroding it away.

Hollow: These small valleys lie in between large mountains, and they are dominated by ready water and one more stands of trees, either groves or small wooded areas.

Ravine: a long, deep hollow in the earth's surface similar to a gorge, and it is likewise usually cut by a stream.

Rift: An area of rocky surface that splits, causing a fissure. This rift reveals a natural break in the stone, a weak spot that usually grows larger with time and erosion.

Vale: A wooded valley crossed by some course of running water where soil erosion is slow due to the land's contours. A vale attracts a large variety of fauna and flora, the latter of which grows vigorously in the area's rich soil.

Valley: A large area of lowland lying between larger more prominent land features, such as hills, mountains, ridges, plateaus, etc. The valley, like the vale, is home to a wide variety of fauna and flora; the flora tends to thrive as the area's water runoff is not too severe, allowing for soil growth.

Lowlands

Lowlands exist at many different elevations. Some run the length of coasts, or stand in stark contrast to hills and mountains. Some lie nestled between two mountain ranges, or may even exist on the slopes of ridges. Lowlands range from very small to large.

Downs: This is a grassy, treeless upland that usually experiences heavier rainfall than normal.

Grassland: An area in which various grasses predominate, such as a prairie.

March: A march is an area of indistinct landform usually bordering two distinct landforms, such as the area between a marsh and savannah. The terrain here is mixed.

Bottomland: These low-lying regions are always located near riverways, and are often wet areas with a high water table.

Bush: An area of densely packed young trees and underbrush found in savannahs, usually bordering or near forests.

Pampas: These vast grassy plains are often arid with few trees and low growth plant life.

Prairie: This generally refers to lush grasslands with deep-rooted grass, which sometimes extends several feet into the soil. A prairie can be very large or small depending on its location.

Savannah: A vast, tropical or subtropical, treeless grassland.

Scrub: Stunted vegetation and thickets characterize this area. They are often associated with arid savannahs.

Steppe: A vast region of low grasses broken up by occasional thickets of brush or trees.

Tundra: An area of permanently frozen subsoils that allow little vegetation to grow. Tundras are usually harsh climates. Grasses that find habitation in a tundra are thick-bladed, stout grasses.

Veldt: An elevated and often arid upland grass area.

Mountains & Hills

Mountains range from young, active volcanic ranges and those being pushed by the movement of tectonic plates to the very old, slowly eroding mountains whose peaks are only a few thousand feet above sea level. But whatever the age of the mountain or mountain ranges, they share many common features.

Crag: Rugged cliff or rock face projected out from surroundings. Crags are often easy areas to climb, as they generally have many useable footholds.

Cliff: A long, steep shelf of rock. Cliffs range from very smooth with almost no handholds to the very rugged and easily climbed.

Dome Mountain: A rounded mountainous extrusion of igneous rock. The dome is very noticeable, as much of the terrain around it suffers from erosion, standing at a lower elevation.

Escarpment: A length of steep, rocky cliff or slope. Tectonic shifts in the crust cause escarpments. These areas often denote borders between two types of areas in so far as flora and fauna are concerned.

Foothill: A foothill represents small, low hills that lie at the base of large hills or sometimes mountains. Rounder tops and less difficult terrain characterize foothills.

Knob: A conspicuously rounded hill, usually protruding from the surrounding area with little tree growth on it.

Knoll: A small knob.

Hill: A natural elevation in the earth, usually smaller than a mountain.

Mesa: A formation in mountainous regions dominated by a broad, flat plane, usually smaller than a plateau. It has steep cliffs on at least one side.

Mount: A single mountain or hill distinct from its surrounding hills or mountains.

Mountain: An elevated region caused by natural forces, usually tectonic or volcanic activity. A mountain is characterized by a narrow summit.

Ridge: A long, narrow elevated area in mountains or hills that dominates regions between other terrains.

Plateau: A large area of land resting on the slopes of a mountain. A plateau is broad and flat, affording plenty of purchase for a wide variety of flora and attracting all manner of fauna.

Outcrop: A rocky feature thrusting out or visible within surrounding non-rocky areas.

Peak: The pinnacle of a mountain.

Tor: An uplift of land in the mountains or hills that stands out from the surrounding area.

Rivers and Their Courses

Rivers, streams, canals, and other waterways offer the Castle Keeper a host of adventuring opportunities. These obstacles challeng the players to pit ingenuity and skills against something other than a monster.

Brook: A slow-moving creek or stream with trees, rocks, and undergrowth dominating its course.

Cataract: A large water fall that creates steep rapids.

Canal: A waterway constructed to facilitate travel and trade. Canals extend from any body of water to another, allowing water to move between them. Canals range from small to large.

Creek: A small, free-flowing body of water that usually feeds larger rivers or into estuaries. Creeks usually originate in high mountains from snowmelt or from underground aquifers.

Delta: Land, usually shaped like a traingle, that lies at the mouth of a river, where it spills into a larger body of water.

Estuary: An estuary is either the mouth of a river, or it is an arm of the sea/ocean meeting it and the surrounding area; it is an area where the sea's tide meets the river.

Falls: A waterfall.

Firth: A long, narrow inlet of the sea or ocean.

Fjords: This narrow inlet lies on an ocean or sea and is surrounded by steep cliffs.

Rapids: A portion of a river where the current is swift, usually narrowed by land, and filled wih obstructions, creating a choppy, broken surface.

Rill: A very tiny water course feeding into a stream, brook, or creek. Rills often bubble up in and around small rocks. The water is very fresh and cool.

River: A large body of flowing freshwater following natural channels and feeding into larger rivers or the sea.

Run: A section of a creek, brook, or stream that flows very fast, almost always down steep channels in mountains or hills or into depressions.

Stream: A small body of flowing freshwater following natural channels and feeding into larger streams, creeks, rivers, or the sea.

Torrent: Very similar to a run, but a larger, violent, fast-flowing stream; a torrent almost always flows down steep slopes and hills. A torrent is more often a section of a creek, stream, or river.

Undercurent: Where water flows beneath the surface of another body of water, such as a river, bay or ocean. It usually flows in the opposite direction of the top current.

Wash: A streambed created by rainfall or sudden snowmelt. The wash is the actual bed carved out of the ground and serves as a channel for the water.

Large Bodies of Water

Water dominates most worlds. As the cornerstone of life and the major source of erosion, water plays a huge role in any world with a vibrant life cycle. As such, the world's languages include many words describing types of water encountered. Building upon the above section on flowing water, the section below provides a small sampling of terms and definitions about standing bodies of water and the land surrounding them.

Atoll: A ring of coral reefs or small islands that enclose a lagoon. Atolls are rich in flora and fauna.

Bay: Partly surrounded by land, a body of water smaller than a gulf, but larger than an inlet.

Cape: An area of land pushing into a large body of water or the sea.

Coast: An edge of land nearest an ocean or sea.

Cove: A recess in the sea, shoreline, river, or lake

Gulf: A very large section of a sea or ocean partly surrounded by land.

Island: Land that is entirely surrounded by water. It is smaller than a continent.

Harbor: An area having many port facilities or docks for ships to anchor, load, and unload.

Isthmus: A slim strip of land with water on both sides that connects two bigger pieces of land.

Key: A small island.

Lake: A body of saltwater or freshwater of any size with land all around it, usually fed by rivers, streams, creeks, or underground aquifers.

Ocean: A massive expanse of water whose currents and movements are predominately free of influence by a land mass.

Peninsula: A land mass surrounded on three sides by water. This land mass projects out from a larger land mass.

Sea: A large body of water partially surrounded by land. A sea often abuts an ocean, connecting to it through various tidal currents.

Shore: Land bordering any body of water: lake, pond, ocean, river, stream, river, etc.

Sound: A long, narrow, often deep inlet lying just offshore.

Strait: A narrow waterway connecting two larger bodies of water, such as two oceans or a bay and the sea.

Wetlands

Wetlands maintain high levels of water all year long, or at the very least, become inundated with seasonal rain or snow. These areas are not restricted to lowlands, as mountainous lowland regions can experience intense levels of precipitation, as well. Wetlands suffer from thick, soup-like soil that retains moisture. Many wetlands include small pools, ponds, and interconnected water canals separated by areas of thicker, rocky soil, or vegetation.

Bayou: A marshy area around a lake, sea, or other body of water, usually stagnant or, at the very least, sluggish.

Bog: An area of wet, spongy ground with deep mosses and poor deterioration. Thick, sodden vegetation covers the surface of the bog.

Fens: These flat, marshy lands have high water tables and sedge grasses.

Marsh: These treeless areas of water-logged soils and shallow water allow bushes and low plants to grow in profusion. Marshes reside near lakes, slow-moving rivers, and low-lying regions.

Moor: A large area of land with poor drainage, where heath and peat moss grows in abundance. Moors are usually damp, swampy, and foggy.

Peatlands: Peat consists of highly organic material, such as swamp grass, that is partially decayed. Peat forms in damp, marshy areas and is very useful as a fuel. Peatlands are marshy areas where a great deal of peat has formed.

Swamp: Similar to a marsh except enough soil has accumulated to allow trees adapted to perennial flooding and water logged soils to grow. Swamps can occur on coasts or inland.

WEATHER

Weather plays an important role in any role-playing game. It is a perfect tool for the Castle Keeper to capture a mood and set a game's tone. Heavy snowfall, torrential rains, the sun scorching down on the prairie, or any similar effect immediately casts the players in an environment they can relate to because, chances are they have experienced such weather in real life. Weather also affects game play, as the weather, much like terrain, directly impacts movement, and it can, under severe circumstances, interfere with combat. Weather is a tool that is easy to role-play, though it is difficult to role-play consistently. In an orderly world, weather follows semi-predictable patterns. It rains certain times each year, and trade winds blow roughly in the same path with consistent regularity. How to track this and deal with weather can be very easy or difficult, depending on your own gaming style.

Role-Playing Weather

It is unlikely players will detect weather patterns or variances in the game world unless the CK has developed some detailed weather system which the characters pass through enough to allow them to begin detecting the pattern. Couple that with the complexity of creating a real-world model of weather and its internal consistency (based on celestial bodies) and the Castle Keeper often finds it easiest to simply just role-play the weather conditions for any given game as they occur. This is easily done and does not require much effort or tracking on the CK's part.

Temperatures and precipitation vary greatly from one region to the next, even in zones located at the same longitude on the globe: elevation, trade winds, stellar activity, cloud cover, humidity, bodies of water, and many other factors all affect a region's average temperature. Unless the CK desires to create the world's entire weather system, laying out how it interacts with the cosmos, it is easiest to reference the daily temperature on **Table 5.3 Average Monthly Temperature**. Determine the equivalent month in your game with the listed real-world month and its included average temperature. These assume a temperate climate, much as you would find throughout North America and Europe. The Castle Keeper must determine which zone the game takes place in; reference **Climatic Zones** above. This information is the foundation of the temperature in the game. Once the climate zone is known, the average monthly temperature is listed on **Table 5.3**.

TABLE 5.3 AVERAGE MONTHLY TEMPERATURE

Month	TM[1]	TW[2]	Dt[3]	DS[4]	M[5]	DG[6]	MC[7]	BF[8]	TC[9]	HL[10]
January	78	73	55	25	51	15	16	-10	-15	0
February	78	72	59	33	54	23	20	-15	-15	1
March	78	73	65	42	58	31	34	5	-9	5
April	78	74	68	53	59	42	54	28	0	19
May	78	75	75	62	65	53	69	41	20	24
June	78	77	79	74	72	65	77	50	25	35
July	78	77	95	84	77	76	84	55	40	40
August	78	78	100	77	77	67	83	59	35	42
September	78	78	80	68	73	57	72	45	30	36
October	78	77	75	55	68	44	59	19	15	35
November	78	76	65	40	59	28	37	10	0	17
December	78	75	57	31	53	19	23	0	-5	5

1. Tropical Moist Climates (Rainforest)
2. Wet-Dry Tropical Climates (Savanna)
3. Dry Tropical Climate (Desert)
4. Dry Mid-Latitude Climate (Steppe)
5. Mediterranean Climate (Chaparral)
6. Dry Mid-Latitude Climate (Grassland)
7. Moist Continental Climate (Deciduous Forest)
8. Boreal Forest Climate (Taiga)
9. Tundra Climate (Tundra)
10. Highland Climate (Alpine)

To use the table, determine the correct month and check the base temperature for the appropriate climate or biome. Decide whether to have the temperature be warmer or colder than the base, then roll 1d20. For warmer temperatures, add the roll result to the base temperature. Subtract the roll result from the base temperature if colder weather is desired. Subject to the notes given for a particular biome, the final sum is the daily temperature, in Fahrenheit. If the CK wishes to use Celsius, subtract 32 from the final sum, then divide that result by 2. Follow the same, whether subtracting or adding, over extended periods of time in order to maintain consistency.

Example: The adventurers are setting off on their next adventure in August and ask the CK for the temperature before they hit the road. The CK knows the climate where the adventurers are is a moist continental climate. Cross-referencing the month of August with the MC column of the table points to a base temperature of 83. The CK decides this is going to be a warmer day than average and rolls 1d20, with a result of 15. Adding the 1d20 result to the base temperature of 83 makes the final temperature 98 degrees. If the CK wanted the temperature in Celsius, he would then subtract 32 and divide by 2, with a result of 33.

The above table assumes a broad range, allowing for various conditions. CKs should adjust the final number by whatever atmospheric conditions or elevation they deem necessary.

Design Your Weather

Castle Keepers should not use the above charts as dogma in designing their own worlds. Often a CK's vision is particularly focused on his own imaginative creations, and his creations may be colder, warmer, drier, wetter, or just generally different. Change the above information to fit your game if you want to convey a particular climate and terrain but find that your world's average temperature range is outside of that listed on the chart above. Simply adjust the numbers to fit your own mold.

Example: Below we use the 12-month Airhdian calendar to demonstrate the average seasonal temperature. Although using the following table is not required in **C&C**, it can serve as a baseline for your own seasons and temperature. The chart assumes a temperate zone for temperature. Aihrde is a warm world with an abundance of annual precipitation. The chart below indicates the averages for the Lands of Ursal in the Cradle of the World, which lies in a moist continental climate. The real-world equivalent for each month is in parenthesis. We have adjusted the average temperature and precipitation by a few degrees to impart that this region is slightly colder than and enjoys more rainfall or snowfall than other similar climates. Adjust your own average temperatures as you see fit.

TABLE 5.4 AVERAGE MONTHLY TEMPERATURES IN AIHRDE

Month	Season	Avg. Temp. (°F/°C)	Avg. Precipitation (in/cm)
Winterdark (January)	Winter	12/-11	7/18
Arist (February)	Winter	15/-9	6/15
Erstdain (March)	Spring	28/-2	7/18
Regeerishc (April)	Spring	41/5	7/18
Lothian (May)	Spring	51/11	7/18
Uthdain (June)	Spring	67/19	6/15
Falkhyhn (July)	Summer	74/23	5/12
Trocken (August)	Summer	73/22	5/12
Frostig (September)	Autumn	61/16	5/12
Erstfhroe (October)	Autumn	48/9	6/15
Lexlicht (November)	Autumn	36/2	6/15
Nochturn (December)	Winter	22/-5	6/15

The temperatures do not hold if you leave the Lands of Ursal. Moving just a little north of the mapped areas of the World of Aihrde (see the **Codex of Aihrde**) places the adventuring party in the broad steppes of the north, where temperatures mimic those of a dry mid-latitude climate.

SEASONS

The second step in dealing with weather is to determine the season. There are four basic seasons that range in length depending on various circumstances, such as solar activity. Basic adventures generally take place in late spring, summer, or early fall, as the weather in these seasons is generally very mild, excepting for the occasional thunderstorm. For a more random approach, roll a d20 on the following chart.

TABLE 5.5 SEASONS

Roll (1d20)	Season
1-5	Fall
6-10	Winter
11-15	Spring
16-20	Summer

WEATHER PATTERNS IN DETAIL

For CKs desiring a more detailed weather structure, it is necessary to determine many more factors: elevation from sea level, longitude (distance from equator), average precipitation, and average cloud cover, just to name a few. Solar activity impacts average temperatures, as do cosmic winds, nearby moons, and so on. Many more factors play into weather, but there are entirely too many to cover here, and thus are beyond the scope of the **Castle Keeper's Guide**. For instance, the average regional cloud cover for one region is dramatically different from that of another. The impact of cloud cover on ground temperatures is very measurable, and the variances from one region to the next are far too great to track.

Weather Conditions

Weather goes beyond simple temperature variances. Storms, blizzards, tornadoes, droughts, and long sunny days all contribute to weather conditions. Knowing whether or not it is going to storm can affect game play, and storms can help create all manner of moods, depending on what the CK wishes to convey, while also offering very challenging conditions for the players and their characters. Determining the actual weather conditions requires a little legwork. Many CKs enjoy making up the weather, and this is encouraged. If they want it to storm, then it storms, rains, or snows. There is no particular need for any rhyme or reason to this. Keeping the temperature averages the same over seasons helps, but there is nothing stopping the CK from announcing a dark cloud bank moving fast from the southwest is bringing loads of rain. Before the characters know it, it is raining.

But for those wanting chance to play a role a little more detail is required. Five categories of weather are described below. Each category also affects movement, as described in the chart following the description (see **Land Movement** below).

Note: The skies are clear except for a few roaming clouds. Gentle winds keep the air moving, and the temperature variance is normal. Travel and visibility is unimpeded.

Moderate: Moderate weather sees winds picking up to 5-10mph (10-16kmh) and an increased chance of precipitation. Sudden downpours are not uncommon, but they are short, and the system moves out of the area quickly. These downpours occasionally bring rare bursts of lightning and thunder with them. Travel is unimpeded, but visibility is obstructed for short periods of time.

Bad: Bad weather manifests in large, continuous storms, whether snow, hail, rain, sand, or even lightning storms. The storms last several days and usually produce copious amounts of precipitation, averaging 6 inches (15 centimeters) or more. Travel is difficult. Visibility is reduced by half due to precipitation; this affects twilight and duskvision.

Severe: Severe weather conditions are driving rainstorms, snowstorms, windstorms, sandstorms, and the like. Storms produce up to 10 inches (25 centimeters) or more of precipitation. High wind velocities and precipitation, such as snow or rain or ice, reduce visibility and makes movement difficult as the ground and everything becomes slick and dangerous to walk on.

Special: Tornados, monsoons, white-outs, blizzards, and hurricanes are special weather conditions which make movement next to impossible. The high wind velocities, blowing material, and amount of precipitation can reduce one's vision to few feet or obscure it completely. For example, in a white-out, vision can be reduced to several feet or yards, and discerning landforms distinctly becomes impossible. In open terrain, losing one's way is easy, even if only moving a hundred feet or more, as there are no reference points to use for guidance. Stepping off a cliff or into a ravine is easy, as movement is almost completely random. Furious blasts of wind from hurricanes and tornados are strong enough to rip trees from the ground and blow a man hundreds of yards through the air. Monsoonal rains can be so thick that vision is reduced as if in a white-out.

WEATHER CHARTS

Weather patterns differ from place to place and from season to season. In general, there are wet seasons, dry seasons, cold seasons, and warm seasons. In some ecological zones, there is year-round rain and high temperature, and in other seasons, there is year-round cold weather and snows. Depending on the prevailing wind pattern, areas near large bodies of water experience greater amounts of rain fall than those further away. **Table 5.6 Weather Patterns** does not pretend to be an exact replica of rain patterns, but rather serves as a useable reference resource. CKs should reference this chart to determine the weather patterns of a desired area. If there is a chance of precipitation, roll on the **Table 5.7 Weather** to see if there is a storm and to determine its severity.

TABLE 5.6 WEATHER PATTERNS

Month	TM[1]	TW[2]	DT[3]	DS[4]	M[5]	DG[6]	MC[7]	BF[8]	TC[9]	HL[10]
January	Rain	Dry	Dry	Snow	Dry	Snow	Snow	Snow	Snow	Snow
February	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Snow	Sn/Ice	Snow	Snow	Snow
March	Dry	Rain	Dry	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Snow	Dry	Dry
April	Dry	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Dry
May	Dry	Rain	Dry	Dry	Rain	Rain	Rain	Rain	Dry	Dry
June	Rain	Rain	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Rain	Dry	Dry	Dry
July	Rain	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry
August	Rain	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry
September	Rain	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Snow	Dry	Dry
October	Rain	Dry	Dry	Dry	Dry	Rain	Rain	Snow	Snow	Snow
November	Rain	Rain	Dry	Dry	Dry	Rain	Rain	Snow	Snow	Snow
December	Rain	Rain	Dry	Snow	Snow	Snow	Snow	Snow	Snow	Snow

1 Tropical Moist Climates (Rainforest)
2 Wet-Dry Tropical Climates (Savanna)
3 Dry Tropical Climate (Desert)
4 Dry Mid-Latitude Climate (Steppe)
5 Mediterranean Climate (Chaparral)
6 Dry Mid-Latitude Climate (Grassland)
7 Moist Continental Climate (Deciduous Forest)
8 Boreal Forest Climate (Taiga)
9 Tundra Climate (Tundra)
10 Highland Climate (Alpine)

TABLE 5.7 WEATHER

Chance (D20)	Conditions	Visibility
1-10	None	Good
11-15	Moderate	2-3 miles
16-18	Bad	.5-2 miles
19-20	Severe*	.1 to .5 miles

If there is severe weather, roll a d4. If a 4 is rolled, then CKs should choose between flash flood, blizzard, monsoon rain, tornado, hurricane, typhoon, or similar storm of their choosing.

WEATHER AND VISIBILITY

Weather can affect how far someone can see, or if he can see at all. Rain, snow, or sand can completely obscure one's vision.

SLIGHT: This is a small amount of intermittent or consistent light rain. This includes flurries and slight snow falls.

RAIN SHOWER: This is a significant accumulation of rainwater that accumulates in a short period of time or over days; this includes sleets and snowstorms

DOWNPOUR: Thick sheets of rain with large amounts of water collection over a short period of time. Downpours are often associated with flooding, tornadoes, and hurricanes. Downpours may also include blizzards and whiteouts.

LAND MOVEMENT

Landforms vary greatly in small areas. Some areas are easy to move through, while others are exceedingly difficult or time consuming to navigate. One can encounter all manner of obstacles, from briar-infested lowland swamps to vast expanses of open, hard-packed savannah and icy cobblestone roads. In one, movement can be as slow as ¼ mile per hour or less, while in the other, one can move as much as 3 or 4 miles per hour. Considering that within a one-mile stretch a person might encounter a lowland swamp; a raging, flooded river; a thickly wooded stretch of forest; and an open savannah, determining movement rates becomes an arduous task.

Castles & Crusades addresses movement in fairly general terms, and the Castle Keeper must bear in mind that any movement rate is subject to change in short areas. The movement rules below are based upon certain accepted averages and generalities in landform. The weather's effects on movement are addressed below; weather can greatly affect the time it takes to travel between two points. Furthermore, movement in this section concerns itself with macro-movement and not micro-movement. Movement on the battlefield or in small spaces is addressed separately.

Very rarely is movement through an area impossible. Consider the vast expanses of the earth men traveled prior to the coming of roads or horses. Mankind had traveled over the Alps and Himalayas, crossed the Sahara desert and the Bearing Straights, entered the deepest African jungles, and moved to Patagonia and into the interior of the Amazon Jungle. The only limits to their travels, it seems, were the world's highest peaks and the depths of the blue oceans. And in both cases, oxygen seems to have been the major impediment. With that said, there is, within any given area, terrain which is impassable. Sheer cliffs; deep, fast-flowing rivers; and other specific conditions can prevent movement. However, within any given region, it is nearly inconceivable that a geologic feature cannot be passed or bypassed, especially with magic - unless, of course, there is no oxygen.

Humans, demi-humans, and humanoids can move fast. The average person, someone in reasonably good health, can move over fairly level road at a rate of 2 or more miles per hour for up to 8 or more hours a day without exhausting himself. This person can do this while carrying a moderate load of up to 30 pounds. A reasonably healthy person can jog, unencumbered, 1 mile in 10 minutes. While great lengths, adding weight slows one down, and the terrain over which someone travels can impede this movement. Bad weather can also slow a person's progress. Furthermore, the more people travelling together, the slower their movement rate seems to become. Organization and training, such as the training given to military units, can mitigate this. At the high end, in forced or speed marches, a healthy person can move as many as 20 miles in 3-4 hours.

Example: Davis used to hike extensively in the Rocky Mountains. On one day, while carrying a 65-pound pack, he hiked 26 miles of trails in the Rockies. With about 60% of his travel being downhill, he made the hike in just over 10 hours. He was not terribly exhausted by the hike, and he had ample time to set up camp, cook a big meal, eat, relax under the stars, and gaze upon a herd of elk in a pasture below. On another hike, it took him 8 hours to move a little more than a mile, with no trail, through swampy lowland replete with vines and briars. He carried only a devil's walking-stick, a few power bars, and several gallons of water. Afterwards, he was exhausted, bleeding from various scratches, irritable, angry, and dehydrated. It took him two days to recover from that foray.

When dealing with movement rates over land, the Castle Keeper should take into consideration the following three factors: terrain, the presence or absence of roads or trails, and the weather. Additionally, CKs might want to factor in the nature of the travelers (civilians or trained military, for instance) and whether or not they have any transport animals and/or vehicles with them.

Terrain, obviously, plays the greatest role in travel. As noted above, the nature of the surface being crossed governs the movement rate. The land is rarely smooth for long: it may rise or fall, or it may have rocks, root stubs, briars, or bodies of water to contend with. Forests offer undergrowth, tree limbs, roots, mosses, and other flora to slow or impede travel. Desert sands slide under one's feet and are surprisingly unyielding to the boot. Mountains offer steep uphill treks, climbs, rocks, small winding paths (if any), loose gravel, undergrowth, snow pack and ice, not to mention elevation issues and oxygen deprivation. The treacherous ground of swamps gives way to deep pools, mired water, thick grasses, mud, and muck. The list goes on. Any type of terrain crossed, except for perhaps open grasslands and savanna, offers its own challenges to movement.

Roads also play a large part in movement. Crossing paved, cobbled, or even simply cleared ground increases movement tremendously, and roads can even mitigate the effect of bad weather. Crossing through a forest where tree limbs constantly jam into one's packs or pull at one's helm and shield is time consuming and arduous. Moving over flat, level ground free of roots and stones makes travel much faster and easier. The Romans learned this early on, so they focused their efforts on building roads, and with them, became the most powerful state of the ancient world. Moving over a well-managed road in a desert is just as easy and efficient as moving over a well-maintained road in a boreal forest or in the tundra.

Weather comes into play when anyone attempts to move over paved ground or open country. Heavy rain can impede vision, make cobblestones slick, turn dirt into mud, soak people and their gear, and so on. Snow can be much worse, making surfaces simply impassable. The open sky and beating sun bring heat that drains the traveler of precious water reserves, forcing them to carry more than they normally would, or they burn or blister travelers, bringing them to a painful rest. Weather stops armies in their tracks, and it does the same to wandering adventurers.

The movement rate of animals adds an additional level of complexity to the issue, as animals can vary greatly in their travelling distances, as well. Many animals do not walk much faster than humans do. Horses, for example, only move at an average walking speed of 2.5 miles per hour. This is not much faster than a human's walking speed. This is why horses make such great traveling companions: Humans can keep up with them if walking. A horse's advantage is that it saunters and runs so much faster than a human runs, and its burst speed is exceedingly greater than a man's; furthermore, it can carry large loads without adversely affecting its walking speed. Over the course of 10 hours, of course, the small differences can become apparent. On an average 10-hour walk, the horse can move 25 miles and the human 20. That's five miles difference or a quarter day's travel for a human. Short canters interspersed throughout the day can increase the horse's travel distance greatly.

As you can see, movement is difficult to manage because it varies so greatly and so many factors impact it. Considering this, the movement rates discussed below are averages derived from the average human stride. Castle Keepers are certainly within their limits to expand or contract these distances as necessary or augment the movement rates as they deem fit. Local circumstances and variables have much to do with movement rates. The movement rates only reflect movement outdoors; they do not concern themselves with movement inside, where a host of other variables come into play.

Determining Movement Rates

The **Castles & Crusades Players Handbook** and the **Monsters & Treasure** books give movement rates for most creatures. **Table 5.8 Movement Rates** shows the common movement rates governing movement in **C&C**, translating them into an average outdoor walking speed. The assumption is that the movement is occurring over level ground and along a well-worn trail, a path free of obstruction, or on an easily traveled road.

TABLE 5.8 MOVEMENT RATES

MV Rate	MPH/KM-H	Normal (mi/km)
10 feet	.5/.8	4/6.4
20 feet	1/1.6	8/12.8
30 feet	2/3.2	16/25.7
40 feet	4/6.4	32/51.5
50 feet	6/9.6	48/77.2
60 feet	8/12.8	64/103
70 feet	10/16	80/128.7
80 feet	12/19.3	96/154.5

*This assumes an 8-hour walking day over gentle ground.

To supply the CK with a very simple and straightforward approach to governing movement rates through terrain and its many obstacles, including the weather, the CK should cross-reference the three tables below (after finding the base movement rate in **Table 5.8 Movement Rates).** Begin with **Table 5.9 Movement Rates Per Terrain** to determine terrain factors affecting the movement, and then move to **Table 5.10 Movement Rates Per Obstacle Type** for obstacle factors; finally, consult **Table 5.11 Movement Rate in Weather**. Together, these tables will yield the final movement rate. This movement rate is based on an individual moving overland with weight, 30-40 lbs.

Elevation and terrain do not affect flying movement at all. Weather can, however.

Elevation

The first terrain feature the CK must determine is the elevation. Traveling high in the mountains means less oxygen, as well as more strain due to the up-and-down nature of the movement. For game purposes, the time gained in downhill travel is average with the time lost going uphill. Elevation changes are generally broken down into the following categories; none, rolling, hilly, and mountainous.

Note: Here the ground is relatively flat. There are no appreciable elevation changes which affect movement.

Rolling: Elevation changes are noticeable and travel rates uphill and downhill are affected. A slight weight gain is given to uphill travel or mitigating factors, such as switchback roads, affecting overall movement rates.

Hilly: Elevation changes are noticeable. Movement uphill slows appreciably, and movement downhill does not replace the lost time or distance of moving uphill. Downhill movements are greatly affected by terrain, as roads or trails switchback and follow irregular courses over any given stretch of land.

Mountainous: Elevation changes in mountainous regions are extreme, and movement uphill can be arduous and demanding, slowing movement rates appreciably. Roads and trails follow very irregular courses over any given mile, switchback a lot, dipping and rising with local terrain features. Movement rates downhill do not replace the time lost in moving uphill.

The effects listed in **Table 5.9 Movement Rates Per Terrain** are the maximum movement rates as a percentage of normal speed. For example, a human moving in mountainous terrain can only move 25% of his normal walking pace, so .5 miles (.8 kilometers) per hour.

The following chart assumes movement through a mountain range rather than climbing a summit. Climbing a summit changes the ascent rate to 5% and the descent rate to 75%.

TABLE 5.9 MVT. RATES PER TERRAIN TYPE

Terrain Type	Effect	Ascent	Descent
None	none	none	none
Rolling	75%	—	—
Hilly	50%	40%	80%
Mountainous	25%	10%	50%

Obstacles

Once one moves off the road or away from well-tended trails, obstacles greatly affect overland movement. Obstacles can include anything from swampy morasses, sandy dunes, piles of deadfall, rocky outcroppings, thick brush, rubble in a city, and even deep grasses. The range of material and debris that can impede movement overland is vast and dealt with in the most cursory of manners. The CK must decide how difficult it is to move through certain terrain types based on the guidelines.

Overland movement can be slow. It can be *very* slow. Even short stretches of land can present nearly impenetrable conditions, and to get through them, hacking and clearing is sometimes necessary. In an old-growth forest with long-living trees, deadfall and debris can staggeringly impede movement. On the other hand, if the rate of decomposition is speedy, the same forest's ground cover clears fairly quickly, making movement much easier. Deserts with deep sandy dunes present very difficult traveling conditions, while regions with rocky escarpments and a few dunes are almost like traveling on along a road.

The Castle Keeper must examine and determine the nature of the environment the characters are traveling through to gauge the difficulty of travel. Determine the type of obstacle below, the effect they have on movement rates is detailed in **Table 5.10 Movement Rate Per Obstacle Type**.

It is important to note that the obstacles have to be significant and consistent to grossly affect movement. All forests, deserts, and even grasslands have their densely-packed areas, but often these can be bypassed or, even though costly in time, moved through. Traveling overland through the Ozarks would be considered travelling through a hilly region (regardless of ascent or descent, so slight are the elevation changes) and have low-density obstacles, despite all the creeks, rivers, deadfall and underbrush present.

On **Table 5.10 Movement Rate Per Obstacle Type**, the effects of movement are assessed for each terrain obstacle type's density. Assess the effects of obstacles after the effects for Terrain.

None: This region contains no appreciable obstacles. The ground cover is slight, and the earth is hard packed, lacks rocky outcrops or other impediments to movement.

Slight Density: This region has moderate movement impediments. The undergrowth is sparse, with small creeks, rocky outcrops, deadfall, and other debris occasionally impeding movement and causing travelers to frequently move around it. These areas might include small bodies of water, boggy areas, deadfall, exposed sandy soils, boulder-strewn ground, vines, and similar natural growth or debris.

Overgrown Density: These areas challenge any creature travelling through them. Dense underbrush, vines, thorn thickets, creeks, large bodies of water, deep boggy soils, deadfall, and other similarly difficult terrain make movement extremely difficult. Often backtracking is necessary to move through an area. Some regions require a wide berth, and sometimes deep, exposed sandy soils slow movement. Snowdrifts, ice, and exposed rock formations also can combine to make travel difficult though these regions.

Thick Density: Movement through areas with a high obstacle rating can be exceedingly difficult. These obstacles include swampy terrain with at least 6 inches of muck and dense undergrowth, sand-dune deserts, areas of deep snow drifts, or areas of densely packed, large deadfall, such as in many old-growth or boreal forests or dense jungle growth like that in the Amazon's interior.

TABLE 5.10 MVT. RATE PER OBSTACLE TYPE

Obstacle Type	Effect
None	none
Slight Density	75%
Overgrown Density	50%
Thick Density	25%

Weather

Weather can greatly affect movement. Because it varies greatly in effect, timing, and nature, weather is discussed separately. Weather can be so severe as to bring virtually all movement to a halt. Some weather conditions are deadly (white-outs, blizzards, tornadoes and flooding, for example), while others are actually invigorating (cool drizzles on hot summer's day, for instance). When considering the weather's effects on movement, try to place yourself in that condition and see how you might react to it. Also, bear in mind, people once spent a great deal more time outside experiencing the weather; they were not relaxing in cooled/heated, dry houses. People were once more accustomed to managing in adverse weather conditions, and, considering the nature of the milieu, the players' characters would also likely be more acclimated to what we might consider adverse weather conditions.

Rainstorms, snowstorms, whiteouts, tornadoes, monsoons, driving rains, snow flurries, heat waves, cloudy conditions, wind, and sandstorms can all hinder, slow, or even stop characters from moving forward should the right condition exists. The weather can be an enemy as deadly as any fantastic creature one can imagine. However, it probably shouldn't be used as such. Weather is most often a backdrop to the story, and it should only rarely be made dangerous. It should, however, be an impediment and obstacle as with anything else in nature. After accounting for the effects of terrain and obstacles, consult **Table 5.11 Movement Rate in Weather**.

None: No weather of appreciable note.

Moderate: This weather type includes snow flurries, sprinkles, showers, low winds, and warm or cold temperatures

Bad: These are rainstorms, snowfall, average winds, or temperatures ranging from just below freezing to high.

Severe: Severe weather conditions are driving rainstorms, whiteouts, snowstorms, windstorms, sandstorms, and the like.

TABLE 5.11 MOVEMENT RATE IN WEATHER

Weather	Effect
None	0%
Moderate	90%
Bad	50%
Severe	10%

Example: A human is moving overland through a hilly region and is off the beaten path. He is on the uphill side of the range, so more than 75% of his movement is uphill. The region is an old-growth, temperate, hardwood forest in late winter, when the undergrowth is minimal. His major movement impediments are the terrain's rocky outcrops and the many streams, creeks, and deadfall present. This is a low-density obstacle region. The human's normal movement rate is 2 miles per hour. This is automatically reduced to 40% because he is moving primarily in the uphill direction, as per **Table 5.9**. So his movement is .8 miles per hour. Modify this further by his moving through a low-density obstacle area, as per **Table 5.10**; then multiply .8 by .75 to arrive at .6 miles per hour. The weather is the final factor to consider. In this case, there are slight snow flurries, making the weather a moderate rating. Consulting **Table 5.11**, the CK must multiply .6 by .90 to come with his final movement rate of .54 miles per hour. Rounding down, our noble adventurer is moving at one-half a mile per hour. Given 8 hours of travel, he can move 4 miles.

Flying Creatures

For flight, consider movement rates as on level terrain and with no obstacles. Weather offers the only impediment.

High wind speeds can reduce the movement rates of flying creatures. It can also be beneficial should the flying creature be moving with the headwind. Some wind speeds are so harsh as to make movement too difficult. To gain the bonus for moving with high winds, the creature must be moving in the predominate

direction of the winds and be in the headwind area, not the tailwind area.

TABLE 5.12 MVT. RATE FOR FLYING CREATURES

Winds	Effect
None	No Effect
Moderate	+/- 25%
High	+/- 50%
Very High	+/- 90%

Getting Lost Outdoors

For those not familiar with the woods, getting lost is not that difficult. Even in broad, open plains, a slow and gradual declination change in direction of movement can cause one to end up many miles from one's destination. In woods and hilly regions, this effect can be dramatic, as keeping one's direction becomes increasingly difficult. Even a ranger can veer off course, though skilled woodsmen usually note when they are veering off course and correct it fairly quickly. Weather conditions also greatly affect one's ability to stay on a targeted direction of movement. Familiarity with one's landscape mitigates this to a great degree, as one recognizes landmarks, landforms, and other familiar terrain.

Keeping track of direction requires a making a wisdom check from time to time. The player characters must appoint a party member as the designated guide; if they fail to do so, the CK should appoint one secretly behind the screen. At the beginning of each travel day, the party's guide makes a wisdom check. The challenge base is always 12. Characters DO NOT add their level to the die roll, but they do add their attribute bonus. Success indicates the person has chosen the correct path. Failure indicates he has veered them off course.

To determine direction, consult **Table 5.13 Getting Lost**. Consult the rating of each feature below to determine the wisdom check's final challenge level.

TABLE 5.13 GETTING LOST

Terrain	Obstacles	Weather
None CL 0	None CL 0	None CL 0
Rolling CL 1	Slight CL 2	Bad CL 1
Hilly CL 2	Overgrown CL 3	Moderate CL 4
Mountainous CL 4	Thick CL 6	Severe CL 8

Determine how familiar the terrain is. If the terrain is very familiar, the character gains a +9 to his check; if the terrain is slightly familiar, he gains a +5, and if the terrain is a little familiar, he gains a +2 to his wisdom check. If a ranger or barbarian is making the check, then add +5 for a barbarian or druid and +7 for a ranger.

Example: The party is traveling through a steep mountain range (CL 4, as per above); the land is covered in slight amounts of vegetation (CL 2); the weather is bad (CL 3). There is a **4th-level** ranger guiding the party. The challenge base is 12. To determine the challenge level, add the terrain, obstacles, and weather to the CB. The terrain rates a 4 so CL 4, Obstacles rates 2 so CL 2, and the weather rates a 3 so CL 3. The ranger is not familiar with the terrain. The total CL is 12 + 9, for a challenge class of 21. The ranger has a wisdom of 12, so he gains no attribute bonus, but his ranger skills gain him a +7, for a total bonus of +7. Any roll of 14 or higher means the party does not become lost.

If the party's ranger fails the check, they move off course by 5d4 degrees off target for that day (right or left, CK choice). To determine a more random direction, roll on **Table 5.14 Directions**.

TABLE 5.14 DIRECTIONS

1	North (N)
2	Northwest (NW)
3	West (W)
4	Southwest (SW)
5	South (S)
6	Southeast (SE)
7	East (E)
8	Northeast (NE)

Increasing Speed

Increased movement speed over long distances by sprinting or jogging can only be sustained for a short time without frequent rest, which tends to offset the the effects of the increased movement rate. With some stress, characters can increase their movement rate in 10% increments to a maximum of 50%, but with a corresponding increase in the amount of time needed to rest as well as a temporary reduction of the character's physical attributes (strength, constitution, and dexterity) by 1 point per 10% due to exhaustion. Increasing movement by 10% requires 1 additional hour of rest, which restores one point in the physical attributes. 20% requires 2 hours and restores 2 points. 30% requires 4 hours and restores 3 points. 40% requires 8 hours and restores 4 points, while 50% requires 10 hours and restores 5 points.

THE WORLD FANTASTIC

For the fantasty world, there are no barriers to the setting's nature. If the world does not follow the normal laws of physics, then the Castle Keeper has absolute discretion to create it as he desires. Worlds of chaos and magic do not have the boundaries of modern physics to determine their composition. CKs should attempt to create such worlds on the fly, as planning them out usually leads to order and structured change; making it up as you go along is the ultimate test of a CK. The Siege Engine is the perfect vehicle to run characters through such worlds.

THE SETTING'S AGE

Playing into the paradigm of using equipment to convey the tone of the game (see **Chapter 3 Equipment**), it is not very difficult to understand how, even as the player uses equipment to establish who his character is, the Castle Keeper can use equipment to detail the setting and establish the game's broader tone. It begins with choosing a setting age for the campaign world. We've compiled an abbreviated list below to help establish guidelines on what a specific age may offer the players in the guise of equipment and weapons.

It is important to note that the generic fantasy setting easily conveys *all* the ages presented below. It is not unreasonable to assume that in a world where elves exist that one society can be lost in its own development and remain a Bronze-Age civilization, where one not too far removed from it has evolved into an Iron-Age culture that utilizes heavy armor and the like. Even if the real nature of cultural transference dictates the Iron-Age civilization changes and evolves into the Bronze-Age civilization, echoes of the older or different culture can easily exist. Castle Keepers who are immersed in too much realism run the risk of alienating one or more of their players. Being too restrictive about the setting's age can seriously retard the players' ability to outfit their characters how they see fit, and it removes that vital area of control from them already discussed in **Chapter 3**.

NOTE: CKs should be very cautious in driving home too many limitations on equipment, and if they do, it is imperative they make these limitations crystal clear to their players before the players begin making their characters. A player who creates a wizard and goes through the trouble of naming him, giving him a description, and outfitting and equipping him is likely to react negatively when he finds out that he can only cast animal-oriented spells.

The following should serve as good guidelines to what a particular Age might entail and what type of equipment would be available.

THE FANTASY SETTING

This is the standard setting for any adventure or campaign. It offers the most choices for players and Castle Keepers. The setting can be as simple or complex as the CK desires. The fantasy world, already filled with elves and dwarves, creates very little imaginative dissonance. Such a world may allow one player to outfit his fighter in a full Greek ensemble of armor and equipment, while a second player may choose to outfit his fighter in chain mail with a kite shield and great helm. Only the participants' imagination restricts this setting.

ARMOR/WEAPONS: All armor and weapons are available.

EQUIPMENT: All items from the **Players Handbook** are available.

CLOTHING: All clothing in a variety of styles is available.

CULTURE: Language is complex and can convey a wide variety of emotions and attitudes. Multiple forms of writing and art exist. Architecture exists in multiple styles and forms. There are domesticated dogs, horses, and a full array of livestock.

SPELLS: Any spells and magic systems are available

MAGIC & TREASURE: Gold is the standard currency, and is supported by silver, copper, and platinum. Magic is an integral part of the setting, so magical treasure is as common as the CK desires. All treasures in the **Monsters & Treasure** are available.

VILLAGES: Villages only have country markets where food is sold. The armorers and blacksmiths generally have rudimentary skills and resources. Equipment here is rare, and is generally available from farmers or small shops.

TOWNS: Numerous towns exist, and they have blacksmiths, leather workers, and most other trades represented. Weapons and armor are not common, but they are available.

CITIES: Numerous cities exist. All types of equipment produced by multiple trades exist and are available within these cities.

STONE AGE (C.30000BCE - 3200BCE)

The Prehistoric period is one that has few options. There are few, if any, urban centers, as the technology to move sewage and store foodstuffs does not exist, or it does exist in limited quantities. Use of any type of metal is impossible, as Stone-Age people do not possess the ability to smelt or mine any ore. Running such a setting would be a true challenge for the Castle Keeper, as the limited options tend to offset the excitement garnered from woolly mammoth battles.

ARMOR/WEAPONS: Weapons are stone and restricted to clubs, daggers, spears, primitive axes, bows (with stone-tipped arrows), and the atlatl. Armor is restricted to animal hide and leather.

EQUIPMENT: Tools consist of diggers and cutters. Stone-Age characters have access to some small clay pottery and bags made out of woven grass and thick cloth. Items from the **Players Handbook** are *extremely* limited; the CK should determine what might be available before starting the campaign.

CLOTHING: Weaving is in its infancy in the Stone Age and used for many simple garments. Otherwise, skins and hides constitute the predominant clothing.

CULTURE: There is some pottery, and writing is restricted to wall paintings, skin scrolls, tattoos, and similar items. They have some livestock and may use horses or domesticated dogs.

SPELLS: Spell use is limited to very simple wizard and illusionist spells of **1st** and **2nd level;** however, druids would have their full complement of spells. Shamans could have up to 4th-level clerical spells.

MAGIC & TREASURE: There is little currency; barter is the standard method of exchanges. Stone-Age settings have plenty of magic, though few actual items from the magic item list in

the **Monsters & Treasure** or the **M&T of Aihrde** books are available. Magic items, charms, totems, and other similar items abound, and almost every participant has his share of them.

Villages: Villages constitute the standard community. Locals can trade or sell their own handmade equipment. It's all made of stone or boiled leather, and won't be very good.

Towns: There are only a few towns, and they are separated by many hundreds of miles. Flinters trade or sell the heads of spears and the flint blades for daggers. Characters can trade or buy boiled leather armor from the merchants and some foodstuffs.

Cities: There are no cities in this culture.

Bronze Age (c.3200BCE - 1200BCE)

The first metallurgy characterizes this age; the name Bronze Age originates from the alloy created by melting copper and tin. This age offers more advanced societies with urban centers, more sophisticated art, dress, and economic systems. The age offers a vast array of weapons and the first transportation. Spellcrafting in a Bronze Age includes all four main spellcaster classes.

Armor/Weapons: Armor is restricted to leather, padded, simple banded mail, and bronze breastplates. A wide variety of shields exist. There is a vast array of weapons to choose from, for the Bronze-Age smith can make short swords, axes, daggers, spears, metal-tipped arrows, and so forth. Helms, shields, and simple suits of armor, such as breast plates and leg greaves, are available. Bronze does not have the endurance of harder metals and tends to break or shatter under repeated abuse, and because of this, the javelin, spear, and bow-and-arrow battles typify this era more so than mass combat.

Equipment: Leatherworking has advanced to the point that a wide variety of textiles and cloths are available; this, in turn, allows for common items, such as backpacks, saddles, satchels, etc. to be readily available.

Clothing: Weaving becomes more advanced, but the introduction of wool allows for more variety in clothing design: tunics, leggings, hats, and similar items are common.

Culture: Sophisticated forms of writing, art, and language exist. Architecture is simple and does not allow for arched doorways or ceilings. They are largely agrarian societies. Use of dogs, hoses, and livestock is common

Spells: All spells are available for all spellcasters.

Magic & Treasure: Bartering remains the standard means of economic exchange; however, copper and silver typify some societies. A wide variety of magical treasure exists, but magical weapons are limited to the age's available weaponry. For instance, there are no magical longswords or longbows.

Villages: Villages abound. These areas will have a merchant or two selling a few weapons or some armor, but they will not have a lot. They won't have an armorer or weaponsmith.

Towns: Towns are common. These areas will have a bronze smith or two who make armor and weapons.

Cities: Everything from the equipment lists made in bronze is available in the cities, but cities are rare and a separated by great distances. Cities usually rest upon the banks of rivers.

Iron Age (c.1200BCE - 476CE)

Iron-Age games possess a wide variety of tools, weapons, and implements. Ore is very common and easier to forge and allows retooling of items. This, in turn, leads to a society that has sophisticated agricultural tools and practices extensive animal husbandry. These two items lend themselves to large urban complexes with mixed populations and active trade routes. The growth of sophisticated tools allows complex clothing designs from a wide variety of materials, such as linen or cotton. Political institutions generally remain simple monarchial or aristocratic.

Armor/Weapons: All weapons are available in the Iron Age, but they are not as strong as steel and only slightly stronger than bronze.. The weapons are easy to sharpen and repair. Armor consists of banded and splint mail, as well as simple forms of chain mail, leather, helmets, and similar items; complicated pieces, such as plate mail, are not available to these societies.

Equipment: As with weapons, most any equipment exists in Iron-Age cultures; the use of iron as a tool allows for the creation of many different items. All items from the **Players Handbook** are available.

Clothing: Weaving remains advanced, but the available materials remain simple, such as wool, cotton, and linen. The variety of tools again allows for more variety in clothing design. These range from tunics to dresses and from leggings to shirts, and they include cloaks, hats, and other common articles.

Culture: The plethora of tools allows for more leisure time, which leads to more advanced forms of writing, art, and literature. Books and scrolls, though not common, do exist. Architecture is more complex.

Spells: All spells are available for all spellcasters.

Magic & Treasure: Bartering remains a common means of economic exchange; however, silver and gold replace bartering in many Iron-Age societies. A wide variety of magical treasure exits. CKs should determine which magical items are appropriate.

Villages: Villages are common and consist of an inn and some homes. Many amenities are available, and craftsmen can work in iron and leather; other trades are common in the village.

Towns: Towns are plentiful and often walled; they house craftsmen of many types, and most goods are available.

Cities: Cities are common. Various tradesmen produce all types of equipment, so the availability of goods is high.

Meso-American (c.2500BCE - 1500CE)

This setting consists of very stratified cultures reflecting a dominant religion-based aristocracy. They have mastered complex forms of agriculture and irrigation, animal husbandry, and even architecture. These advances allow for large urban centers, with stone buildings, roads, and complex trade patterns. They often coexist with or dominate Stone-Age societies.

Armor/Weapons: Only leather and hide armor are available in these settings. Generally, the warrior elite did not wear any form of armor. Small wicker or wooden shields are available. War clubs, axes, daggers, small swords, the spear, atlatl, sling, and similar items dominate weapons.

Equipment: These societies have a wide variety of equipment, but they do not work in iron, so their equipment is limited to wood, leather, cloth, and similar items on the list. Some items, such as hooks, are made from bone, shell, soft metals, cold forged.

Clothing: Clothing consists of complex woven clothes for wealthy members of the society, but the lower classes wear more simple weaves augmented by animal skins and leather.

Culture: Meso-American culture possessed a great deal of leisure time, which in turn, led to advanced forms of writing. They conveyed their language not just with printed materials, but via visual stone work, using logograms as opposed to an alphabet. They have a high degree of astronomical and architectural skills.

Spells: All spells are available for all spellcasters.

Magic & Treasure: These cultures possess advanced trade patterns, dominated by the trade of precious stones, such as pearls, and commodities rare in their given environment. For instance, certain rare sea shells are highly prized and used as a means of exchange. With this and limited manufacturing abilities, many items from the **Monsters & Treasure** are not available in these societies.

Villages: These villages are bustling with merchants and craftsmen, but they are making lots of stone and obsidian tools and only a little bronze.

Towns: There are not many towns, but within the existing ones their craftsmen can work in bronze.

Cities: There are only a few of these, and all of them are religious communities. The craftsmen here deal in all the things of the **Players Handbook**, but these items would mostly be made from bronze, though a few iron items would be available.

Greco-Roman (c. 3200BCE - 476CE)

This setting spans many different eras, from bronze to iron. Advanced intellectual cultures typify Greco-Roman worlds, ranging from geography, philosophy, mathematics, and science. Political institutions are complex and interactive, including tyrant kings and democracies. Tool use is extremely advanced, and the societies are marked by a high level of agricultural development, animal husbandry, and a manufacturing base.

Armor/Weapons: Almost any weapons are available, other than pole-arms. Tridents, short swords, bows, javelins, and slings are all in common use. Armor consists of leg and arm greaves, breast plates, large helms, and a variety of shields. Chain mail is almost non-existent, and plate is not available.

Equipment: The advanced nature of Greco-Roman societies allows for a wide variety of equipment. All items from the **Players Handbook** are available.

Clothing: The standard clothing consists of one or two pieces of broad cloth called a peplos; these are pinned at the shoulders, and they hang to the knees or ankles. Some wear the more formal toga, a broad oval cloth that drapes over and wraps around the wearer in more complicated folds.

Culture: The learned nature of these cultures requires very advanced forms of record keeping. Written language uses an alphabet instead of logograms, and mathematical languages are common. Papyrus scrolls are the normal mode of written record, but are rapidly being replaced by the codex - an early form of book - at the end of the period. Art is plentiful and includes paintings, embroidery, sculpture, pottery, and similar items.

Spells: All spells are available for all spellcasters.

Magic & Treasure: Though barter exists, it is rare; gold, silver, and precious stones dominate trade. Treasure is common, and all items from the **Monsters & Treasure** are available — except restricted arms and armor.

Villages: Villages are common. Every one of these communities has a craftsman or two specializing in one type of device. There would be a blacksmith, as well, and a horse stable.

Towns: Towns are common, especially at the point where two large rivers connect. Towns have merchants and smiths offering all types of equipment made of iron.

Cities: Cites are also common. These communities reside in large river valleys or at the end of rivers connecting to the sea. They have large markets selling everything a character could want.

Early Medieval (c. 476CE - c. 900CE)

This type of setting consists of simple agrarian societies dominated by warrior elites, often styled as kings and barons, but little more than warlords controlling regions, whether great or small, through force of arms. Animal husbandry and agriculture are not advanced and are supplemented by hunting and raiding. This only allows for smaller urban centers and restricted technological development.

Armor/Weapons: Single combat or small skirmishes dominate warfare. Longswords, shields, and chain armor are the normal weapons and armor. Any form of plate and advanced pole-arms, such as the guisarme, do not exist in such a society.

Equipment: All items from the **Players Handbook** are available.

Clothing: The dress here is similar to Iron-Age dress. Tunics, trousers, and hoods dominate the clothing style. The wealthy augment their simple attire with cloaks or leather, and they use more elaborate forms of embroidery.

Culture: Early medieval culture is highly labor-intensive, allowing for little leisure time, and the arts, thereby, suffer. Written language is simple, and art consists largely of calligraphy, statuary, and religious items. A government dominated by warrior hierarchies typifies the setting; a growing mercantile class and guilds dominate society.

Spells: All spells are available for all spellcasters.

Magic & Treasure: Barter is a major component of early medieval trade, and this is augmented by the use of silver, and on rare occasions, gold. Despite these limitations, all the items from **Monsters & Treasure** are available.

Villages: These communities are common and consist of an inn and a few houses, but have few craftsmen.

Towns: Many towns exist along the rivers, and many different craftsmen inhabit them. All types of equipment are available.

Cities: All the large cities are located along the seacoasts or at the junction of large rivers. Merchant guilds ensure the availability of all types of reasonably priced goods.

Late Medieval (c. 900CE - 1300CE)

The feudal society typifies this setting. This is a form of government wherein the ruling classes use military protection as a medium of exchange. Lords and vassals exchange property in the guise of fiefs for protection and service. The age is highly advanced in animal husbandry, which further enhances the ruling warrior caste. Warfare and the pursuit of warfare dominate the society

Armor/Weapons: All items from the **PH** are available.

Equipment: All items from the **Players Handbook** are available.

Clothing: The increased manufacture of textiles allows for a wider variety of clothing styles and cloth, most notably the introduction of silk. Trousers are still common, but amongst aristocratic classes, the hose begins to replace them. The tight-fitting doublet replaces the tunic of the early medieval period. Women wear the bliaut, a wide garment with long sleeves, folded or crimped to fit their form.

Culture: An increase in leisure time allows the aristocratic class more time to indulge in the arts. Writing is common, but books are still transcribed by hand. Books replace the scroll.

Spells: All spells are available for all spellcasters.

Magic & Treasure: Gold and silver are the standard form of economic exchange; bartering still exists, but it is rare. All items from **Monsters & Treasure** and **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde** are available in this setting.

Villages: These communities are common and consist of an inn and a few houses, but few craftsmen.

Towns: Many towns exist along the rivers, and many different craftsmen inhabit them. All types of equipment are available.

Cities: All the large cities are located along the seacoasts or at the junction of large rivers. Merchant guilds ensure the availability of all types of reasonably priced goods.

Renaissance (c. 1300CE - 1600CE)

The Renaissance setting is perhaps the most advanced arena in which to run a game. The society is highly advanced and has intricate social bonds between merchants and warriors and between the clergy and the ruling elite. Agriculture and animal husbandry are sciences pursued in an almost industrial fashion. Manufacturing is common, especially in textiles, which allow for very elaborate forms of dress made from a variety of material. Weapons run the gauntlet, from the very simple to the very complex, even allowing for the introduction of early firearms.

Armor/Weapons: All armor and weapons are available, including firearms and cannons.

Equipment: All items from the **Players Handbook** are available.

Clothing: Dress is more complicated in these societies. Hose generally replaces pants, and shirts replace the more common tunic. Vests, hats, cloaks, and capes are common. Wealthy men wear hose, tunics, and cloaks, which are often elaborately embroidered. Wealthy women wear floor-length, cone-shaped dresses. Common men wear pants and shirts, and common women wear thick wool dresses.

Culture: The Renaissance society is very similar to the Greco-Roman one in that it emphasizes academic pursuits. This allows for wide variety of written and spoken languages. The printing press and movable type make books very common.

Spells: All spells are available for all spellcasters.

Magic & Treasure: Gold and silver are the standard form of economic exchange; bartering still exists, but it is rare. All items from **Monsters & Treasure** are available in a Renaissance society.

Villages: Villages have workers of metal and merchants with goods. The best goods come from the travelling tinkers, who often barter for goods.

Towns: Many towns exist along the rivers, and many different craftsmen inhabit them. All types of equipment are available.

Cities: All the large cities are located along the seacoasts or at the junction of large rivers. Merchant guilds ensure the availability of all types of reasonably priced goods.

CHAPTER 6 – THE CITY

The urban world is as varied in its structure as is the natural world. In the panoply of human history, the vast array of social structures is staggering. Humans are inventive and part of the imaginative processes goes into ordering the world in which they live. Understanding these cultures and social structures can take a lifetime and even then, one can only partially come to understand them. Add fantasy races, magic, or the supernatural creation of the world, and the possibilities boggle the imagination.

However, in considering that, there are constants that seem to fit every society and culture, which once applied, can be manipulated and bent to fit ones needs. If used as a baseline for development, one can add magical and supernatural elements or effects to a believable outcome. Our suggestion is to position the setting someplace the players are familiar with, with cultures the players readily understand and can play in without sundering the suspension of disbelief.

As such, a preponderance of attention is given over to varieties of west European, Roman, Greek, and medieval social structures. And within this contained area and time, there are vast arrays of cultures and structures. However, do not let this limit your imagination. Read about other cultures and their ordering and draw upon them for inspiration as is your want.

THE URBAN LANDSCAPE

By urban landscape, we refer to that arena of activity encompassing the social environment created by humans, demi-humans, etc. This includes the lifestyles and makeup of single dwellings and thorps to large cities, the economy, culture and religion, government and taxes, laws and ethics. All this makes up what we refer to as the urban landscape.

BASIC ELEMENTS

There are several basic elements that one must understand before beginning, developing, and detailing one's world. These range from population density, occupation, settlement, economy, government, and law.

Population density: There are no reliable statistics on population density for most pre-industrial societies. It goes without saying that density varied greatly from region to region depending on social and agricultural development, government, natural settlement patterns, arable land and other limiting factors. Cities would have the highest density of population while rural regions dominated by nomadic peoples would have the lowest population densities. Within any given area, population densities could and did vary greatly as people tended to cluster the developments close to one another with nodal densities being very far apart.

Occupation: In pre-industrial societies, the vast majority of time was given over to agricultural pursuits. Only a small percentage of the people, from 1-10% were involved in non-agricultural pursuits. Furthermore, in many very early societies, everyone was involved in agricultural pursuits of one type or another (fishing, hunting and gathering). Only when population densities increased and agricultural overload or surplus was regularly available, did other occupations even become possible. However, even in societies in which agriculture takes up the vast majority of time and effort, there are those people with specialized skills to produce and make objects of need or value (baskets, pots, weapons, rope, etc.).

Settlement: As people moved from nomadic ways of life, they tended to settle in small communities (both for safety and to take advantage of common skills). These communities developed around certain places. Fertile areas along major water courses or in places where water was readily available is the most important factor in determining settlement placement. Settlements also tend to cluster close to one another, such that populations aggregated in localized regions with large swathes of unoccupied land between villages or towns. Settlements also tended to develop around trade routes or major transportation arteries.

Economy: Barter, or trade in kind or service, was the primary method of exchange in most pre-industrial societies. Even those with a well developed monetary system used barter and exchange of service as the primary method of economic exchange. However, money was developed and used once

economies of scale came into being and trade over large areas occurred. Accepted mediums of exchange developed. This was usually in precious metals but not always. Pre-industrial societies used other items of accepted value such as shells, beans, ceramic plates, or even paper money.

Government: With only a few exceptions, governments prior to the industrial revolution were autocratic to some degree. This does not refer to those societies, which were still primarily tribal, or band oriented in which they were more egalitarian. Rigid structures of leadership far outnumbered those with more fluid and egalitarian governments. Leaders had varying degrees of power as well. Sometimes power was nearly absolute and rule by fiat occurred. In other cases, power spread out amongst or between several classes or institutions but still rested in the upper tiers of the social ladder. Revolution, conquest, and war were the typical methods through which power changed hands.

Law: As a general rule, laws to which a community is bound are unwritten. They are social and cultural rules and regulations and norms of behavior expected of everyone. Only with highly concentrated populations and diverse populations and the need for regular or routine punishments did written laws develop. Even so, these were not quite as extensive as those used in most societies today. They were sparse and general in nature. The application of law and punishment varied even when written down. Local authorities and judicial systems differed from community to community and person to person. The law givers and judges almost always had ultimate fiat in how the authorities carried out legal actions.

THE RULE OF TEN

As a basic guideline to development, it is safe to use the rule of 10. You will see a constant reference to 1 in 10 for this or that and 1 in 100 for other things, 10% for this or that, etc. For example, 1 in 10 people in a normal population are involved in non-agricultural occupations. Although the numbers do not reflect any reality, they manage a reasonable facsimile thereof. The Castle Keeper is encouraged to amend these numbers as they desire or do more detailed research to garner more accurate numbers. When faced with any unique situation or one not dealt within these pages and for consistency and ease, it would be best to maintain the 1 in 10 ratio for development.

CULTURE

If one thinks of several of science fiction's or fantasy's greatest works and their settings, e.g. Tolkien's Middle Earth, Howards Hyborian Kingdoms, Burroughs Barsoom, Dune, Pern and Ghormanghast, all these fantasy settings are famous and rightly so. The books and stories are highly regarded. It is not just the stories that make these books so phenomenal, but the setting, being the backdrop against which the story unfolds. This backdrop is complete with language, history, social structures built around believable governments, trade patterns, migrations and more. In short, their creators introduced the reader to a believable culture for in it laid all those elements of our own past, which ground the player in the game. There is level of believability in these stories' settings that allow them to come alive, more so than in simple tales of adventure. By developing a culture, one can create a story and spin a yarn, through which players can guide their character that is both believable and fun.

To manage this, it is first important to step back and look at one's game world and become critical of it and its elements. Then, take a core concept, the one which defines your world, and develop everything from that in as fluid and non-mechanical manner as possible. Elements of the 'game' should grow out of the root story so that the characters are playing a part in a system of cultures and history.

Culture as a concept is very simple. A culture of a group of peoples is a set of socially learned patterns of behavior and knowledge. The patterns of behavior include everything from child rearing habits, marriage, historical reference, and religious practices; to settlement patterns, construction techniques, legal structures and holiday celebrations. The knowledge includes values, modes of expression, language, social expectations, symbolic knowledge, and world views. Humans and others can have vastly different cultures but each culture should be homogenous with the majority of its members acting within its cultural constraints.

The following is a list and description of basic cultural elements. Before embarking on world creation, become familiar with them so that you may incorporate all of them into a cultural whole as outlined in the section following.

HISTORICAL REFERENCE

Most cultures have a common or root historical reference from which to draw. This is a history of the people of a region. Whether this history, as commonly known, is true or not, is not important. What is important is that the history offers a reference point that most people in that culture can call upon with which to frame the world they live in. It offers a broad understanding of where they come from and even where they may be going.

In developing a history for your world and its people, brevity and broad strokes are a necessity. Too detailed a history can be stupendously time consuming and offer little to game play other than peripheral knowledge. Broad strokes and generalities are all that are really necessary to place the setting within a context. For example, one could go so far as to list all the major battles which occurred during one campaign of conquest or simply generalize for the conquest. One method is time consuming and offers no particular advantage to the setting while the other gives the CK room to develop details as the campaign necessitates or as real time passes and takes little more than a sentence. Furthermore, broad strokes allow the players to actively participate in the world history by creating character histories, interacting with the CK and discovering secret knowledge. This creates a setting in which the Players feel they have a vested interest and one in which they will be more interested in playing.

The CK should know, in general terms, the real history of their world and then overlay myth and misconception onto it, allowing for discovery of the real history by the players to be an adventure in itself. A well developed history will give the CK valuable information on the nature of a people and their region, their religious constructs, their language and even political systems as well as deep rooted conflicts, cultural differences and extents of cultural influences.

Historical references provide a unifying theme and identity for a group of people. It makes one community unique as compared to others, as one group's history values and accentuates certain things over another (military conquests and battles in military societies or philosophical and literary achievements in those societies that value such things). Use history to do the same for any campaign or campaign world.

The history need not be a highly detailed canvas from the beginning of time to the present, but can focus only on the society where the adventure is taking place, or a cornerstone to the world beyond. Full development comes with time, and should come to fruition in game play.

STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

There are four basic levels of political life to consider: bands, tribes, chiefdoms, and states. These apply to human, demi-humans, and humanoids as it references organizational levels and not types.

The majority of the cultures with which the CK deals are at the state level. However, there should be nomadic peoples or semi-sedentary peoples of the chiefdom level who border the state regions or dwell between them unless the entirety of the world is settled. Furthermore, states often incorporated nomadic peoples who were essentially conquered chiefdoms. There should be a mixture of these political types in order to maintain a variety of playing styles and adventure types.

All types of creatures could exist within any of these levels though some may be, by their nature, limited to certain types of organization. Ogres, for example, live in band or tribal level groupings, while elves may exist only in chiefdoms as they are very reluctant to come together under one large unifying source. There could also be band level elves as well as state level elvish societies. It is up to the CK to decide.

Bands: These are small groups composed of either extended families or family groups. They usually act cooperatively and have a foraging subsistence pattern. They are often nomadic or semi-nomadic. Although bands of peoples may share a cultural identity, they do not often share political power and rarely come together for unified actions. Leadership is often a result of one's accomplishments and not an inherited or elected position.

Tribes: Tribal groups are essentially bands who have a unified political or economic structure which gives the differing bands greater cohesive action. Although the individual tribal elements may be the size of bands, they can also extend into the hundreds or more. They are often nomadic or semi-nomadic. Their subsistence patterns vary greatly but are usually a combination of hunting and gathering and agricultural pursuits. They do build villages which are occupied for a year to a generation, but rarely longer than that. There are 'political' offices recognized across bands, though they are fluid and command is often in question. People rise to positions of influence via personal accomplishments or inherited positions.

Chiefdoms: These are large tribal organizations that cover extensive areas and have a formalized political authority or authorities. These are often horticultural peoples with lesser reliance on hunting and gathering for food, though that may still make up a significant portion of their caloric intake. Specialization of economic activity exists within these groups and redistribution of goods occurs via political authorities and barter. These stratified societies invest political and religious power in the hands of a family group, and frequently a chief from that group. Sometimes the family group is extended to include cousins and other relatives of the main family. Villages exist but those living in them often, though not always, abandon them for seasonal reasons, or due to animal migration. In some cases, villages last many decades before abandonment.

States: This level of organization possesses a high level of political organization with a bureaucracy to run the society. It can be very large, encompassing millions of people and hundreds of thousands of square miles. Generally, a large bureaucracy manages the political system of a state, the state relying upon the bureaucracy for its day-to-day functioning even though the legitimate rulers themselves may be from one family group or extended family. States are often horticultural and have static villages and cities with highly specialized economic activities.

Power is divested in state level societies, as the authorities depend upon enforcement via a bureaucracy or groups of individuals not related to the king, monarch, or highest authorities. These powers are often at cross purposes and always seem to be trying to take power from one or another. So, for example, although an autocracy has power vested in an emperor, that emperor may be beholden to a religious authority for his legitimization of power and beholden to a military structure that carries out his will, while each is beholden to the emperor for their capacity to govern legitimately.

Following is a list of various political systems which one might find in your world or available for use as an organizing principle. Each can intermix with the others to a lesser degree but each has one dominant theme.

Anarchical: Anarchical governments reflect a social organization in which power is constantly in flux between groups and individuals. The only unifying structure is the process by which members of the society select someone to rule.

Autocratic: An individual or group rule with absolute power. Their power is usually derived from heredity tradition and custom. In these societies, the autocrat is not limited in the nature of his decision making process.

Democracy: Democratic governments are those where select citizens of a society have a direct say in government. Generally citizens gather in forums to determine the conduct of government and vote on the issues concerning the governance of the society; often citizens in democracies vote for a leader in whom they invest the power to conduct or carry out the will of the people.

Dictatorship: All government rests in the hands of a single individual. The dictator is the final arbiter of all issues of governance. A dictator's mandate does not rest in hereditary or traditional customs but rather through powerful forces within the society such as a military force, an oligarchy, or a democratically minded citizenry.

Feudal: A series of inter-related political, economic, and military obligations based upon land ownership. The central figure of a feudal society was a landholder, usually a warrior, who leased out his land in fiefs to other warriors. These warriors swore homage to the central warrior, the lord, promising any number of obligations; usually these obligations were military and involved providing troops to the Lord. This is not always the case, however; sometimes the vassalage involves economic obligations as well. The warriors who swear homage become vassals to the Lord. These vassals can use the land and reap all its economic benefits, build structures on it, improve it, tax it and usually hold complete control over the legal rights of the inhabitants, barring only the laws of the Lord. Actual ownership of the fief was normally, but not always, retained by the Lord. (For a more in depth look at feudalism, manorialism, vassalage, etc. **see Chapter 7**.)

Monarchical: This system of government consists of a single ruler or ruling class who control all or some of the state's political power. This power does not have to be absolute; more often than not the monarch shares power with several ruling families or a class and is somewhat limited. However, greater power lies in the monarch, as tradition and history reinforce his power. Although power can be divested amongst several parties, for a true monarchy to exist, a relatively stable upper class of ruler must exist and willingly obey the monarch.

Oligarchy: Oligarchic societies are those in which several competing groups control the power nodes of a society. These groups can be landholders, merchants, guildsmen, hereditary leaders, military leaders, or the like. The decision making process is structured and resolution met in some generally accepted manner, usually through committee of the oligarchs. Oligarchs constantly vie for power within the existing framework, both against each other and against outside forms of governance.

Republican: A republic consists of divergent, often competing, power nodes, within a society. They allow the inhabitants of a community to participate in the manner of their own rule by voting for members of their society to represent them in a governing body. Some primitive tribal society's method of governing reflects the republican approach whereby members of the band or tribe select chiefs, even if not in a formal voting process; they often do not hold lifelong positions of power or, even if they do, their pre-eminence as decision makers could shift as others come to the fore.

Theocracy: These are societies whose leadership and decision making rest in the hands of an ecclesiastic class, organization or group. The decision making process is severely limited by that of the divinities' will and the power or capacity of those selected to carry out the divinities' will.

Plutocracy: Wealth is the basis of who governs in plutocratic societies. Those who have gained or inherited the societies' wealth control virtually all power nodes. These societies tend to be very flexible as wealth determines the entrance and position in the class.

Designing a Government

Designing a government or governments for a world or campaign can be fun and challenging. Castle Keepers only need to put as much effort into the project as they desire the characters to interact with the governing structures. It often suffices to simply know what type of government the society has that the characters have entered. This way the CK understands where the power lies and what types of NPCs the characters are likely to encounter; i.e. a baron, a sheriff, mayor, citizen's patrol, etc. Building a simple framework is enough; make notes on the type of government, the leaders of that government, where the power actually resides, in a castle or city, or a single roaming person, and lastly how that power interacts with those whom he rules. This allows the role playing to continue without much interruption, facilitates the rapid exchange of information from CK to player, allowing the adventure to propel forward.

If the adventure itself calls for more direct interaction with the government or the players insist that their characters actually interact with the governing powers then the CK can rapidly expand upon the above framework, fleshing out local figures who run the local branches of the government, assign names to those the characters are likely to interact with, and understand any taxes, tithes, laws, or rules that the characters must follow. These interactions can be extremely fun to develop and play. Allowing characters to come before a local magnate or lord and interact with them as would any feudal knight can bring amazing imagery to the game and campaign; often these moments are some of the most memorable.

When the Castle Keeper sets himself the task of designing the government, refer to the above structures and a government, choosing the one that most fits the imagery desired. Remember that often, governing structures possess several traits from different types of government. It is not unheard of that a monarchy, based upon the feudal system, has within it several cities that are run by plutocratic oligarchs. These systems can be terribly complicated but can also offer a great deal of variety and fun to the game.

The CK should take a cautionary note about interactions with monarchs, feudal lords, emperors, autocrats, and the like. The vast majority of players' real world experience resides in

the western philosophies of democracy and equality. Feudal societies, those based on inherited power, monarchs, and such do not normally possess such philosophy, nor are any real reference points for "all men are created equal." Their whole structure is built upon power, inheritance, and a belief that those in power are there for a reason that is often beyond the comprehension of others. It is often very difficult for players to shed their inherent distrust for such power and role playing things such as bowing, kissing of the ring, showing respect, often go against deep seated cultural norms. Caution the players before interacting with those in power that their characters would understand showing signs of respect and obedience, and that they themselves would expect it were they in a similar position. Allow the characters and players some latitude in the unfolding drama that must undoubtedly take place when the philosophically minded republican meets the autocratic Baron.

ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

There are three basic systems of economic exchange: reciprocity, redistribution, and market economies. Each of these three can exist in the same cultural sphere but one usually dominates economic exchanges.

Reciprocity: In this system, goods or services exchange with an expectation of return in an indefinite future, if at all, and not necessarily in kind. This type of system usually occurs with small groups of socially committed and bonded individuals or groups. For example, many parents rear their children supplying them with food and shelter for much of their lives and even fund, materially or otherwise, their child's economic activities until they are stable. Nothing is necessarily expected in return except their success and perhaps, care when the parents are elderly. In another example, a herdsmen would give meat or animals over to a local farmer in dire need with little or no expectation of return, other than that farmer should recieve help in their time of need. Rules of hospitality involve simple reciprocity. One gives food and shelter to visitors with the expectation that they will do the same should they be visited, even if the service is not of the same value or degree. This type of exchange depends upon normative social behaviors accepted by all participants in the society. Should one individual neglect to act in an expected manner they might find themselves ostracized and fall outside the acts of reciprocity.

Redistribution: This system of exchange dominates chiefdom level societies and plays an important part in many, if not all, state level societies. In this case, goods are not primarily exchanged between individuals but through a third party who redistributes goods gathered for the collective good. For instance, in many early societies and autocracies, the ruling elite gathers most of the agricultural produce and redistributes it as necessary. This type of exchange involves high management and authorities vested with the power to redistribute. In early Egypt, the ruling elite gathered much of the grain produced along the Nile into great storehouses and redistributed it throughout the year to those who needed it, or to whom the state allotted it. Even in modern societies, redistributive economies exist. Market economies still exist within most of these societies to a greater or lesser extent. Rome, for example had a thriving market economy that coexisted alongside a redistributive economy. Often, the goods gathered by the state were agricultural or raw materials and not finished goods.

Market Economies: In a market economy, the vast majority of exchange of goods and services occurs between merchants and individuals or between individuals. Goods are purchased and sold via credit (money), which is widely accepted as a mode of exchange for goods or by barter. Goods do not sell for equivalent value but at such a rate that the seller, ideally, makes more money than the goods cost to make or buy. Market economies also tend to have fluid prices for both goods and services based upon availability and/or desirability. These economies are always highly specialized with production of goods and services divided up amongst individuals, groups, or organizations.

Early or nascent market economies are dominated by barter and not transactions that use credit or monies. Peasants, farmers, laborers and the like often traded raw materials, produce, finished products or even labor for the same. For example, a farmer with a large tract of land may allow another farmer to plant it with wheat in exchange for a portion of that wheat after harvest. Further, a common laborer might exchange his work for a place to stay and food to eat. Produce from farmers was often traded at market for finished items (e.g., a pig for a bed) or services (e.g., a chicken to have a physician examine an ill child).

Coming to understand elements of a market economy, including but not limited to economic activity and the vast array of institutions, social attitudes, methods of production, modes of exchange and valuation of items that make up economic activity can consume an entire lifetime and still leave one bereft of a storehouse of knowledge concerning economies and how they behave. Designing an economy from the ground up might seem a daunting task. It shouldn't be, primarily because the CK doesn't have to design an entire economy.

In general, for gaming purposes, only a few aspects of an economy and how it affects player characters needs addressing. The details and nitty-gritty of commerce are not the concern of this game nor should they, in most cases, be the concern of those playing it. By relying on a few basic principles, the Castle Keeper should be able to create a reasonable facsimile of an economy for the world they create and how it affects the characters.

All economies vary in their nature and involve many mediums and modes of exchange and expectations derived from the exchange process. Any culture will have a complex mixture of these. In designing a society's basic economy, select a basic structure and add the necessary detail into it. Also, decide upon the varying degrees of barter, moneyed exchanges, and reciprocity or redistribution before play begins. This goes a long way as to informing how a community develops and often reflects the power structure as well.

Example: In the realm of Kayomar, the Paladins rule many quarters of the bureaucracy. Their ecclesiastical representatives are in charge of redistributing grain to city dwellers from farming communities. Though the realm itself is a monarchy, the arrangement and monarchial dependence upon the ecclesiastical order reflects a theocratic society or one in which the ecclesiastics possess a great deal of power. East, in the lands of Aachan, another monarchy, a highly skilled military organization, the Order of the Unicorn, are largely in charge of this same distribution, reflecting an oligarchic relationship in economic distribution.

For game purposes, it is generally best to base the economy of the vast majority of the world upon the trade and sale of agricultural goods and finished products. Most economies of the world are likely to be based upon barter or a redistribution system, something the characters may have never experienced.

Only in more ordered civilizations do vast amounts of moneyed exchanges take over as the normative trade item. For example, a goat herdsman would trade 1 goat for a month's supply of corn. A farmer may give a pig over to a craftsman to help pay for fixing his barn, or chickens given to a priest for blessing a farm, etc. Almost all exchanges on the low end occur like this. The accumulation of wealth in moneyed or valuable items is scant in agricultural communities.

Assuming this, the average value of trade goods between people varies for many reasons. In **Castles & Crusades** it is almost impossible to establish a bartering system without first designing huge economies of scale that transcends the imaginary political landscape. Therefore, money exchanges occur as a means of transacting trades for various things and labors which barter no longer serves as a practical means of distributing goods or services. Cities and towns, merchants and consumers, governments and polities all exchange money for goods and services as a means of barter. The characters most often purchase finished goods or food with money or gold or some medium of exchange. This is not to say the characters can not partake in the barter system. A character could offer services to others in exchange for lodging, food or other goods and services.

All this serves as a guideline for a functioning medieval European level of social development set in a fantasy setting. This presents a functioning social group where starvation does not reign and power and wealth accumulates in a small landed group. This can range widely depending upon the society one designs. One in which slave holdings are extensive the lower low class may make up 90% of the population. Vast disparities in wealth and power like this, however, tend to produce social instability so take care in the arrangement of power and money and how you manage them.

Another society, perhaps in a city state controlled by a mercantile oligarchy, may have a higher percentage of middle class people for example. All types may realistically coexist in a fantasy setting.

Using Table 6.1 Social Class and Purchasing Power

Table 6.1 lists the social standing of people in an average society as well as the yearly purchasing power of a family in that class in gold, the de facto currency in **Castles & Crusades**, the purchasing power that individual has beyond necessity items (such as food and household upkeep) and finally the number of people per 10,000 that might be found in each class.

TABLE 6.1 SOCIAL CLASS AND PURCHASING POWER

Social Status	Value in Gold†	% of income	#per10k pop.
Low lower class	100 gp	—	1000
Middle lower class	200 gp	—	3000
Upper lower class	300 gp	1%	3000
Lower middle class	400 gp	2%	2000
Middle middle class	800 gp	4%	800
Upper Middle class	1,600 gp	8%	100
Lower upper class	3,000 gp	10%	50
Middle upper class	15,000 gp	15%	25
Upper upper class	30,000+ gp	20%	1+
Special*	unlimited	1%	1+

*The special case is for those whose wealth is essentially immeasurable: god emperors, deific figures, monarchs of absolute power etc., can call upon the wealth of their entire society to build, create or spend. They can do so to the point of bankrupting a community if they so desire. These figures should be far and few between but perhaps exist.

† Do not interpret our use of gold to mean that gold is the only standard medium of exchange, as one could just as easily use silver.

It is also important to determine the amount of monies on average being exchanged within a community. Do so by averaging the income for a community and multiply that by its size; the result is the average community yearly intake. Multiply this by 1% and then you have the fluid moneyed income for the community. These are average community incomes and can vary greatly seasonally and depending upon the actual wealth of that community.

Economics in the Game World

Inevitably, there will come a time in developing the world or setting, or even in developing the states, urban centers, and locales of the adventure, that some type of usable economic system is necessary. Whether you build one yourself or use the one supplied here is utterly dependent upon your time and desires. Making an economic system that is both useful and fun can be challenging. However, for those who desire a quick and dirty economic system, the world of Aihrde offers one that is easy to use and fits most any game styles. As with many things concerning Aihrde, the system is basic, and attempts to incorporate different times and historical epochs in order to allow players and CKs the greatest arena of play possible.

This system is very easy to port into any homebrew or other game setting. Simply replace the introductory material and the rest ports over fairly quickly.

The economy of Airhde is well developed. The thousand year reign of the horned god, Unklar, established an orderly world with both land and sea trade routes that were monitored and managed by the efficient imperial bureaucracy. When Unklar's reign ended much of the efficiency was lost, but nevertheless, the Young Kingdoms adopted some of the commercial sophistication that developed in the Age of the Winter Dark.

Free men do most of the work in Airhde, however, slavery is common in the east and along the southern coasts of both the Ethrumanian and Aenochian landmasses. Airhde is in a pre-industrial stage with craftsman producing the goods. Trade is generally shifting from the southern climes to the more northerly ones. The countries in the north such as the Hanse City States, Avignon, and Aachen, are changing the nature of commerce by producing large quantities of manufactured or luxury items.

Airhde possesses basic market economies based upon barter and monetary exchange. The monetary exchange can be very chaotic as there are multiple countries making coins. In this regard, merchants govern a coin's value by its weight and "cut" them in order to achieve proper weight when traded on the open market. Each country in Airhde is assigned a tier of trade or commercial development indicating the state of its economy and industry, whether it engages in long distance trade, and average taxation. The tiers range from one to five, with each tier being cumulative. Thus, the descriptions of tiers one to four would be applicable to a tier four country. These tiers operate on a state as well as village level. For example, a tier four country may very well have many tier two villages.

Tier One: Foodstuffs, clothing, and essentials; local trade.

For the most part, trade within these countries consists of local trade in the bare essentials such as foodstuffs, clothing, simple furnishings, and tools. Much of the trade occurs as barter, confined to a local level. Virtually every Tier One country is capable of feeding and clothing itself. Inhabitants pay taxes in commodities or service rather than coin. Most peasants thus pay their taxes in livestock, bales of hay, or sacks of oodstuffs. They may also pay taxes by serving as farmers, wood-cutters, labor, etc.

In Tier One areas, simple weapons, light armors, leather helms, wood shields, adventuring gear costing 5 gp or less, and mounts costing 30gp or less are available.

Tier Two: Luxury items and raw industrial material; there is a short-medium distance trade.

Merchants and middlemen become involved in the long distance trade of industrial goods or raw materials. The industrial goods making up the bulk of the second tier of trade include timber, metals (iron, copper, tin), oils, coal, salt, and barley, wheat, corn, and similar foodstuffs. It also includes slaves in those regions where it is not outlawed. The trade routes for these items are usually short, with several rare exceptions, due to the high cost of transportation and its necessary substructure of armies for protection, buildings for storage, and general infrastructure. Industrial goods are subject to moderate taxation, with traders typically paying in coin or barter.

In Tier Two areas, simple weapons, light to medium armors, wood helms and shields, adventuring gear costing 10gp or less, and mounts costing 75gp or less are available.

Tier Three: Processed goods and luxury items; long distance trade.

Tier Three areas are able to utilize industrial goods and raw material to manufacture luxury items and their trade generates the greatest wealth for the coffers of the importing and exporting countries. Luxury items include spices and fine cloths such as silk, wool, cotton, and linen, rare foods such as fruits, wines, beers, and finished goods such as weapons, armor, tack and harness, furniture, rope, and fittings for ships. Because these items are relatively easy to transport compared to raw industrial goods, the return on investment is potentially high. Hence, these items are traded across the known world and merchants brave dangerous lands to gather them. The high profit margins induce high taxation. The taxing authorities, however, will typically accept payment by barter as they are always in need of many of the tier three processed goods.

In Tier Three areas, exotic materials, and renaissance weapons costing 100gp or less, medium to heavy armors, steel helms and shields, adventuring gear costing 100gp or less, mounts costing 200gp or less, and special and superior items costing 150gp or less are available.

Tier Four: Specialty & rare items; long distance trade.

Tier four encompasses speciality and rare items such as artwork, gold, finely smithed goods, tapestries, rare animals, books and paper, and large items such as ships, wagons, or elaborate stonework. These valuable items fetch large sums, usually made to order. Tradesmen, merchants, and aristocrats trade vast sums of wealth for these items, which in turn begat high taxation. Taxes on these items are almost exclusively paid in coin.

In Tier Four areas, all weapons, armors, gear, mounts, special items, and siege weapons are available.

Tier Five: Magic items and services.

The final tier includes those countries where the traffic of magic items and specialty services occurs. Specialty services include divinations, healing, resurrections, and other magical spells, or the practice of sages. Although the sale of magic items or specialty services might occur on an infrequent basis in tier

two to tier four economies, only in tier five economies does an active marketplace dedicated to such trade exist. Magic item sales attract high taxation. Governing authorities tax specialty services moderately, but religious specialty services, such as healing, are not taxed at all.

In Tier Five areas, all weapons, armors, gear, mounts, special items, and siege weapons are available.

Impact of Adventure

Bringing vast amounts of wealth into a normal community can upset, quite dramatically and quickly, the economic balance of things. Should one go to a small village and give every inhabitant 100gp, where 1gp a month is a normal income, it can cause massive social unrest. Some people might quit their normal work, others would hoard the money, and others might spend it, flooding the local economy with even more wealth. This latter event may cause a commercial boom that either creates a false economy, that is unsustainable over the long haul, or conversely allow for the creation of a more solid economy that drives the forces of urbanization, growing the community. This in turn might leave the local land fallow and unused and cause a localized shortage of food.

Remember that the wealth characters bring into a community, though not necessarily commensurate with it, can overburden the community as to cause inflation or deflation and all its attendant problems. One time arrivals have a momentary impact depending on its size but consistent arrivals of large amounts of wealth can have long term impacts. Playing this inside the game context opens up hosts of doors for more adventure, plot lines that involve local power structures, government, even bandits and monsters drawn to the wealth that a community suddenly displays; a wealth derived from the treasure troves of lost dungeons, ruins, and a host of slain monsters.

MONEY

Of special note, money can take on many different forms. Coin made from rare metals (gold, silver, copper, platinum etc.) is common in many societies but it can also take on the form of paper monies (as in many modern economies) or other forms of accepted exchange such as beads, shells, jade, salt, or even seeds. The key is that everyone within that economy accepts that mode of exchange as usable. Value is ascribed to material because of its rarity and beauty, but also because of well-established socio-cultural norms. The feather of an exotic bird that is both rare, difficult to hunt, and possessed of religious significance may easily hold greater value than pretty stones dug from the earth.

Role playing opportunities abound when the CK removes coinage based on metals from the game, replacing it with something different. A society where beads are more valuable, especially colored beads, will dramatically shift the focus of the game's role playing; where the populace believes that these beads possess magic qualities (and in magic-bearing world they very well may) then the value of the beads is immense and the normal metal-based coin the characters may have in abundance is valueless. Suddenly the party confronts a situation where they are penniless, despite their wealth, and unable to purchase or buy any supplies, food, lodging, or what have you. This offers the CK a perfect backdrop for a ready made adventure.

Coins

Generally coinage consists of valuable metals such as gold or silver. This is especially true when exchanges between states or other political entities occur where the inhabitants place a value on the coins. Within a state other items of shared cultural value might be recognized but there were usually some type of control placed upon their production or distribution to keep everyone from making their own money. This is usually the central authority, whether the government or the religious networks; at times, merchants band together in order to create a stable coinage. But usually the King or central authority retains the authority to manufacture coins, as this manufacturing process itself offers a source of revenue for the central authority even as much as taxing income or items that have sold. Often the authority debases its own currency, mixing it with foreign metals in order to create more coinage than the amount of actual metal allows. This short-term gain is offset as the debased coinage actually has less value than it shows so that eventually people reject the coinage, seeking other means of trade. In the long run debasing fails to serve the needs of the producing authority.

In a world where there is no central bank, and no governing authority possessed of a standard system of weights and measurements, the manufacture of coins becomes problematical. Without precision based industrial machines coins are left to the skilled work of craftsmen who must use hand made stamps, that often create inaccurate or lop-weighted coins. For this reason merchants, tax collectors, and even careful buyers in such societies, the standard fantasy campaign, often weighed the transacted coins when purchases were made. As coins were often of variable values and degrees of purity, the weight was the important denominator of value and not the coins themselves. They clipped excess weight off or added more to come up with the proper weight in precious metal of an items value. As the state develops and expands, coins become more accepted and the weighing and cutting played a lesser and lesser role in the exchange. But for the vast majority of campaigns any coin that circulates for awhile is often possessed of clip marks on its edges.

Exchange

The economy of the vast majority of the world would be based upon the trade and sale of agricultural goods. Most of this would occur as a barter system. Only in more ordered civilizations do vast amounts of moneyed exchanges take over as the normative trade item. For example, a goat's herdsman might trade 1 goat for a month's supply of corn. A farmer may give a pig over to a craftsman to help pay for fixing his barn etc. Almost all exchanges on the low end occur like this. The accumulation of wealth in gold, cash, or otherwise is scant in lower income families and agricultural communities.

For the rest, money becomes a primary artifact of exchange. Money exchanges occur as a means of transacting trades for various things and labors where barter fails to serve the complexity of the exchange. In cities and towns and between merchants money is exchanged for goods and services, as barter would not suffice to provide the goods or services one needs.

In market driven economies, the value of items varies from region to region, town to town and season to season. Rarely are items set at a fixed price and remain that way for long. The exchange process is supposed to produce a profit for the seller. This is not always the case but it is the idea.

Towns and cities are the major nodes of exchange as thorps and smaller villages would not produce enough surpluse or be too far off major arteries of travel to support normal craftsmen and the like. The cities and towns supply the outlying farming communities with their goods and services and act as nodes of exchange between them. Likewise, regionally speaking, certain areas of your world (e.g., those lying upon major travel routes or highly productive regions) would act as supply region for disparate areas.

For this reason, some regional communities are not able to provide even the basic services that the kingdom's economic system normally offers. Finding a skilled blacksmith, able to repair damaged chain mail in a small village, is unlikely. That same blacksmith is probably more than able to create a horseshoe, mend tools, and even make simple weapons such as arrows and spears. But complex armor is beyond his ability. Likewise with the local shops; the merchandise they normally offer for sale is more in tune with the local economy than with what a wandering band of adventurers might need. If you need your goat cheese, then the mill store is the place to be, but if you need a bandolier able to hold potion bottles, it's just not likely to be available.

As with large economies, the Tier system (outlined previously) can govern regional or local economies.

Cost Disparity

In the cases of larger towns, cities, and regions, there can be vast disparities in costs and pricing. Supply and demand govern the relative price. Supply is affected by availability, cost of transport, storage, and the rarity of the resources needed to manufacture the item in question. Demand is driven by need, location, and price. For the purposes of most fantasy economies, the CK should discount the idea of trends driving the demand. In agrarian based economies, which most fantasy games are, manufactured goods are almost wholly goods used in the work place. There is very little disposable income for use on trinkets or gadgets. Only the very wealthy would participate in such activities.

For those places on major trade arteries a wider variety of merchants are available to purchase items and the price of items creeps up, unless the amount of goods overtakes demand, creating a surplus. In these circumstances the price of items trends downwards. In those areas where there are few craftsmen and little money, prices tend to creep down, unless manufactured goods directly impact the living wages of those in the locale, in which case the prices creep upwards. Availability also plays a significant role in cost. Should items be widely available, then the cost tends to creep down whereas if a good or service is not readily available, prices tend to creep up.

For game purposes, the CK should consider the price of things listed in the **Players Handbook** as a pricing scale achieved through a balanced market economy of supply and demand. However, market situations can create some major role-playing fun through the inability of the characters to purchase certain items at reasonable prices.

Added to all this is inflation and deflation. When a market becomes suddenly flooded with a certain good, the prices tend to creep down. On the other hand, in general when a region or area is flooded with new money (i.e. a treasure hoard gathered from a party), prices tend to creep up.

By referring to the chart below, one can get a general idea of how to price goods or services based upon availability. To use **Table 6.2 Cost vs. Demand,** determine the commonality of an item by rolling a d6, or more likely, decide on your own and adjust the price listed in the **Players Handbook** or other resource accordingly.

TABLE 6.2 COST VS. DEMAND

	Commonality	Price Affect
1	Very Rare	+50%
2	Rare	+20%
3	Average	normal
4	Average	normal
5	Common	-10%
6	Very Common	-20%

Inflation is a very complex matter but generally results from an increase in the supply of money or whatever a society deems worthy of a unit of trade. Inflationary increases are difficult to measure or tabulate. However, by referring to **Table 6.3 Inflationary Rate,** the Castle Keeper can quickly regulate its effects on the game. The Castle Keeper should fix the average yearly income for the community in question and if that average yearly income has an increase of 10% then inflation begins to take place and prices rise 20%.

TABLE 6.3 INFLATIONARY RATE

Money increase	Price Effect
10%	20%
20%	40%
30%	90%
40%	200%
50%	200%

Goods

The first basic concept to work with is production. In pre-industrial societies, 90-95% of all production revolved around agriculture. The raising of crops and animals for food consumed most of the populace's economic activity. It would not be unreasonable to assume that the primary economic activity of 9 out of every 10 adult people, ages 9 and up, in any given society, is agricultural. This includes the farmer, the herdsman, the butcher, the miller, etc.

Outside of agricultural pursuits, a developed economy would include the gathering of raw materials for production. The activities include mining for many types of rock and ore for use in building (marble for construction), material production (iron for weapons) and for wealth (gold), forestry (wood for building), etc. Safely assume that 9 out of 10 people not involved in agriculture are involved in these types of activities.

So, for example, in a community of 100 adult people, 90 would be involved in agricultural pursuits, 9 specialized raw material gathering, and 1 left for other specialized pursuits. In a community of 1,000 it would be a 900, 90, and 10. The CK should alter these numbers slightly for highly productive lands and low production lands as well. Also, some communities tend to specialize, especially mining communities. Dwarven communities, for instance, are highly specialized where 9 out of 10 adult individuals work in mining, smithing, construction, etc. Such communities can not generally meet their own food needs and require outside support.

In small communities, people often have multiple roles as well. Many farmers undertake forestry, animal husbandry, or gathering wood. The same principle applies to other skill sets as well. Stone masons for instance, had multiple roles to fill with skills such that they could meet their basic needs in tool repair and construction. Single task-management is a concept that industrial societies rely upon, inhabitants of pre-industrial societies must by their very nature require multi-talents and tasking.

In developing a world, or setting, or even a region, the Castle Keeper should decide upon the basic makeup of the region they are developing and have at least an idea of where raw materials and goods come from and what those raw materials are. Locate sources for wood, wheat and major sources of food, animals, stones, ores etc.

Foodstuffs: Wheat, barley, potatoes, corn, rye, cattle, sheep, pigs, fowl, etc. These make up the majority of local production and selling, but in some cases the producers or those who own the produced foodstuff ship the material over vast distances to support urban areas and as part of complex trade relations with both undeveloped and developed economies.

Raw materials: They include wood, stone, clay, coal, wool, cotton, linens, animal hides, etc. These items are heavy and expensive to transport but make up the majority of intermediate trade route exchanges.

Ore: They include iron, copper, tin, gold, and other mined items. These items are very expensive to transport and can travel long or short distances.

Finished goods: These items make up the vast majority of all trade routes but dominate medium and long trade routes and include ropes, chairs, candles, tack and harness, weapons, armor and any item one could think of.

Exotic goods: These are specialized items that are usually expensive to transport, generating large expenses to ensure safe delivery to their destination. They are also costly and rare and include finished goods such as jeweled scepters, silk goods, clocks, etc. and unfinished raw materials such as gems, silk bolts, etc.

Considering all this, one should be able to come up with basic economies. Just pick regions and decide what they produce in excess of need and can sell. Although this is fairly unimportant to the specific campaign, it adds texture and depth to the game. To know that a certain region is famed for its grape production and wines while another is noted for its coal production allows for the creation of setting specific material to areas and texture in which to adventure. This background texture increases the impact the overall setting has on the game and the fun for those involved.

Trade Routes

The next step is to produce trade routes. In general, trade routes are local, regional, and national, with some international routes as well. Trade routes have a tendency to follow major rivers where possible, and follow the easiest path between two points. Also, trade routes move from village to village and town to town. Major trade routes go from large city to large city and follow the easiest path. Those communities located along major trade routes tend to be wealthier than those off the trade routes. They also have a tendency to tax a lot more as well.

These routes are not necessarily maintained roads, but may be trails created over time through long years of usage. Countless wagons, stock animals, horses, mules, donkeys, and feet leave an indelible impression on the land. The trails become recognizable due the imprint left on the ground with crushed or non-existent vegetation. For a full description of movement, please refer to **Chapter 5**.

Taxes, Duties, and Fees

Ruling bodies, individual rulers, and states themselves derive some of their income from taxes, duties, fees, and tariffs. The collection of fees and taxes vary greatly over time and space and depending upon need and desire of the ruling elite. Only in recent memory has income based taxes become the normal approach to taxation. Income for pre-industrial societies, many of whom do not possess a common monetary policy, cannot base revenue collection on tender alone, relying as much on goods and services to pay taxes and fees.

The CK should be wary in introducing any form of taxation into the game, as this can needlessly bog down a game, almost immediately removes any fun the game has, and generally serves to irritate players whose characters almost always begin some palace revolution in an attempt to not pay the taxes. These games, though fun, can wreak havoc with a world setting and the adventure the CK has planned.

If, on the other hand, the CK wishes to achieve a level of realism to the game and introduce taxes into the mix, then the following rules should apply. In general one can say that taxes collected amount to 10-20% of the value of a property. On average, to determine the value of a property, multiply the yearly income of its inhabitants by ten.

In most cases, taxes collected are not in money but in service and goods or a combination thereof. So, for a peasant family, the taxes they pay may be 20% of their food production every year or 3 months service to the king's land or a combination thereof. For wealthier people, the lord of the land may require money as taxes or those people may be able to pay money in taxes.

Another manner of collecting taxes was through duties and fees. Nobles, whether King, Duke, Baron, or Knight, often own bridges, mills, water rights, patrol bridges, etc. They charge people for their use. The dues collected for their use varied greatly. Small amounts of money were required in some cases and from some people (and not for others) whereas in some, goods were required. Also, markets were a major source of income for lords. People paid for attending a market and selling material. They would pay for a booth or area as well as paying surtax for the items sold and even pay a percentage of profits. Nobles, and governments in general, might tax the type of clothing one wears, the armor they have, weapons, their profession, or any other number of particulars that allow them to eke a living off the sweat of others.

Taxes were often onerous and, because of the amount taken, often kept people from accumulating any wealth over time. Only the most successful and wisest of farmers and merchants would make much wealth over time.

Taxes were not always annual affairs but levied when and where the lord so desired. In times of war, taxes were often exceedingly high and levied several times a year. In times of relative peace and high prosperity, taxes are often low. However, the ruling elite always had access to the monies and wealth of its people and though it is infrequent for them to tax their people into poverty, nobles do on occasion bankrupt their realms with onerous taxes levied for projects designed by the ruling elite.

Failure to pay taxes or duties could result in various punishments as well as confiscation of goods and removal from property, etc. There is no limit to the punishment in an autocratic society.

Adventurers may, at the behest of the CK, suffer the same fate as any commoner or merchant. Any Lord worth his salt must surely realize when characters bring enormous sums of money into their realm. They do not hesitate, of course, to send the taxman to take what they believe to be his right.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

All cultures have some social stratification scheme. There are essentially three degrees of stratification: egalitarian, ranked, and stratified. As cultures develop and the cultural groupings become larger, they tend more to the highly stratified arena. Each of these schemes varies in its degree and kind so the Castle Keeper will have some decisions to make, but the basic scheme should be easy to establish.

Egalitarian Societies

In these societies there is little notable difference between members. Although some members may have more prestige and influence than others, due to perhaps their accomplishments, their material well-being is not significantly different than that of others.

Ranked Societies

In ranked societies, honorary titles and rights reside with individuals, kin groups, or families. These titles of authority set those members aside from the others in that society, but they do not always confer greater wealth or power upon those individuals. However, practically speaking, these honorary titles do confer upon its holders a level of distinction and power which prevents the societies from being egalitarian. Chiefdoms, small states, or dispersed states often have the characteristics of ranked societies.

Stratified Societies

Stratified societies exhibit high degrees of social, economic, and political disparity. Power often resides in a few individuals or families who hold these positions as hereditary posts or have them conferred upon them. In other cases, the individuals or family groups earn positions through deeds, marital or otherwise. In all respects, stratification produces notable differences from one class to the next.

Social stratification extends both laterally and horizontally. There are those who are considered the lowest ranked members of society, such as dung collectors in medieval cities, or those who stand outside normal social arenas, such as the cow-eating Hindus. For the CK, deciding upon the basic structure of a society should be easy. Basing the stratification on any ancient or medieval system is easy enough to do; establishing nuances within that system, say women with property rights is solely in the field of the CK. Slaves are at the bottom (almost always, though they may have significant monetary value and thus have 'value' outside their social status) with those working the most mundane tasks generally toward the bottom and those near the top in rarer occupations.

TABLE 6.4 SOCIAL RANKS

1	Slave, Beggar
2	Commoner, Peasant, Laborer
3	Mill Worker
4	Skilled Craftsmen
5	Hunter
6	Warrior, Merchant
7	Sage, Wizard
8	Cleric
9	Noble
10	Noble by Blood
11	Hero
12	Apostle

The social stratification is important for the character vis-à-vis how they relate to its membership. Are the characters, as adventurers, regarded as 'outside' the social system? In order to determine their social ranking, it requires the CK to have at least a rudimentary understanding of how that society views holy men, wizards, women, racial variants such as half-orcs, commoners, etc.

Racial variants, such as half-orcs, are also an important factor in creating social stratification schemes should one care to go that far. Not only must the CK consider the variations of races and their relative view of one another but the CK must also consider the various humanoid and demi-human races and how they are viewed (for more information refer to **Chapter 1, Table 1.32 Standard Racial Interactions**).

It is often the case that social stratification places differing laws, punishments, and expectations upon members of differing social statuses. For instance, the punishment for adultery by a noble may be execution, whereas that for a peasant may be a public beating. On the other hand, the punishment for stealing by a noble may require compensation, whereas the punishment meted out to a peasant is the removal of the offending hand.

Stratification schemes can be fairly broad as the characters will likely only be involved with it in a cursory manner but they should exist and reflect the other cultural restraints in the social makeup of the community. Social stratification can occur as a result of any of the following: religion, income, land ownership, occupation, blood line, deity affiliation, culture, color, language, gender, age, race, and education to name just a few.

The vast array of stratification schemes evident in human societies is nearly unimaginable so virtually any scheme developed by the CK for their societies is likely acceptable. And, considering the nature of demi-human and humanoid cultures, the variations on social stratification could be staggering. These schemes also help to bring meaning to your world and the interrelations of its various parts. They also serve as perfect foils for adventure or conflict.

Example: The adventuring party arrives in the township of Beluthune in the Rhuneland. Here the orcs rule and have had done so for many centuries. However, humans and other races have long been welcome as the orcs ruled them in the days of the Winter Dark, enjoying the taxation of their industry. But Angrod the dwarf is not welcome for his kind rarely gave up the fight during the long dark. They do not immediately attack or slay the dwarf, for they desire to do business with his comrades and enjoy the wealth of their adventure. But within the Rhuneland he is viewed as little better than a slave. He is followed, harassed, overcharged for the simplest items, and his every action is viewed with suspicion. In short, their society does not accept him on any level and they treat him accordingly. Angrod, being a dwarf, does not take it so well, and the mayhem that follows is for the CK to run and the players to enjoy.

When designing a social stratification scheme be sure to consider the various aspects of the society vis-à-vis its culture and history and how they relate to the character. In general, those on the lower end of the stratification tend to suffer material and physical abuse more so than those on the upper end. Further, stratification can be lateral as well as horizontal such that some members of society may be able to garner wealth, and accumulate land. However the rank disallows them to hold office or really exert any influence over their political system via their political structure.

GENDER AND RACIAL INEQUALITY

In designing a culture, it is important to remember that inequality exists in many societies, particularly highly stratified, pre-industrial inequality. Inequality exists for a variety of reasons, many of which may not seem logical but are, nevertheless, the case. Playing them in any role playing game can be tricky and it is not recommended that CK pursue these beyond the obvious dislike that orcs may have for elves or dwarves for goblins and so on. Creating real world scenarios where modern earth racial inequality does exist, does little to enhance the game and generally only aggravates play.

The CK must also keep in mind that in fantasy role playing games, where race literally does mean another species, such as orc or dwarf, then racial antipathies take on another meaning entirely. Furthermore, in societies where women can be wizards and can hold terrible power at their fingertips it might reduce some of the misogynistic behavior the CK may wish to place in the game.

Gender

Gender inequality is notable in most every culture where men dominate public power. Only recently and with few exceptions in history has it otherwise been the case. Additionally, there are no known matriarchical societies even though there are matriarchs within certain societies. This does not mean that the campaign setting within which play takes place cannot have such societies, but rather that there are no clear historical metaphors for the CK to rely upon.

Women do not necessarily have to hold positions of lower social status and in any case, women have almost always ruled the private sphere of life (i.e. the home and hearth). In designing your setting, the CK must decide which position women hold. There are special cases as well. Within societies which are patriarchal, women do hold positions of distinction outside of the norm. There are queens and shamans and religious figures that do hold political power and even in the middle ages there were rare cases where women were merchants of significant power and wealth. Even in a patriarchal society, women often had power within certain spheres of life and influence over sons and husband who perhaps held entrenched social positions.

Race and Racism

Technically speaking races do not exist within the human genetic sphere. In C&C, the term "race" refers to those species that cannot interbreed. Not withstanding that, there can be racism in your world. Racism can be defined by many factors including skin color but traditionally this has had little to do with racism. Rather, culture, religion, linguistic stock and other things have been the delimiters of racism and prejudice. This can exist within a society or culture and used to keep inequality in check. Occasionally various physical attributes separate people, but this rare.

Also, because there are demi-human races which are in fact differing races with differing abilities, racism can and likely should exist between the various races. The CK can use racism to augment role play, and establish setting conflicts and other event or plot elements. Creating a world where dwarves and elves do not get along is simple, making a setting where this antipathy actually comes into play is wholly another and it adds a level of realism many are unused to.

Racism can begin, or nearly so, to be aggravated and brutal. Some people or races could be held in such low regard that they are killed while others could be held with slight distrust that only limits interrelations or breeds conflicts. For the break down of racial antipathy in **Castles & Crusades**, refer to **Table 1.31 Standard Racial Interactions** in Chapter 1.

A final cautionary note: do not abuse or overuse either of these concepts. What may seem like a pretty cool, real world concept injected into the game, may turn out to be an onerous task that only serves to aggravate and frustrate players.

RELIGION

Building religion for a fantasy setting is one of the most important facets the Castle Keeper can tackle. One must imagine that the mythologies and the deities that occupy them actually exist for those within the fantasy world; and that they interact with it and them or have interacted with it or them. Creation and cosmologies must be designed by the Castle Keeper in a manner that allows them to pass the mythologies along to the players, quickly and understandably, as these always have an important role to play in the real world and should in a fantasy world. What is important here is that once that cosmology is designed, it has meaning - real meaning in the everyday life of a character.

Traditionally, and from an anthropological view, religions are just cultural identifiers which serve the purpose to unify a society and endorse and enforce, to some extent, its rules and regulations, as well as offer didactic systems through which members of that culture convey knowledge between individuals and generations. In fantasy settings, this anthropological definition takes on a much deeper meaning; the religious beliefs, mythologies, deities, and the powers they are able to command serve the actual setting, both for story and mood, but also in practical game mechanics. The deities have a real impact on the world and the characters and NPCs that inhabit that world, through spells or often direct interaction, so the structures of religious belief that the CK constructs should reflect the reality of that situation.

With a religion there are various aspects to consider; creation, pantheons, history, interrelation, impact, locality to name a few. And this only addresses the religion one creates, not its impact.

Religions take on many different forms. One need but glance through a comparative religions book to understand that the plethora of religious beliefs known to man belie the imagination and infinite possibility in the creation of one is obvious. In designing your own religion, the sky, or your imagination, is truthfully the only limit. Refer to the following guidelines, keeping these thoughts and points in mind as your mythology unfolds on paper with pen.

Creation: The CK must decide if the world's creation originated through the action of a deity or deities or always was and will be. The decision about creation has a great impact on the nature of the world created. Do the world's origins lie in a great pool of nothing, or was their matter in the beginning, a something? Or is it in an ever-repeating cycle. These systems have an impact on how the spiritual world works in the real world or should at least relate to it. Also, a destruction event, usually in the far future, should mirror the creation event.

Destruction events like Ragnorak, the Norse belief of the world's ending and beginning, or the end of a great turn, have a massive impact on one's culture and how one interacts with the world. In this case, begin at the beginning and have an ending; a people walking toward the light as opposed to those acting only against a backdrop of eternity.

Pantheons: The CK will have to decide whether the setting is animistic, monotheistic, or pantheistic. A pantheon serves as the vehicle of delivery for the world's mythology and a bridge for the characters, particularly the cleric and druid, to interact with the powers that actually grant the characters spells and abilities.

Animistic Religions: These religious cultural markers reside in plants, animals, places, and geologic formations. Deities in the traditional sense do not populate these religions, but rather reside in highly localized areas.

Monotheistic Religions: In a monotheistic setting, there is one deity who the culture nominally recognizes as the only deity involved in the act of creation, destruction, etc. This does not preclude the 'belief' in other deities but simply means they do not exist in the setting and as such should not be able to deliver on clerical spells.

Pantheistic Religions: In a pantheistic religion, there is no end to the possibilities. The CK can create as many deities as desired - of whatever power and caliber - to cover as many aspects of the world and the manner it works as desired. The Castle Keeper should relate the inhabitants of the world to its deities however, at least nominally.

History: Most religions have a history, a time before and the current time in which the game takes place. Almost all creation events occur in the historical era. It is also the time in which the gods interrelated with one another and vied for power or dominance or set the world and its aspects in motion. The history should encompass as many significant aspects of a religion as possible but also relate to the world the CK designed. For example, should a deity have heaved up mountains at one time that changed the course of a river and the nature of kingdoms, the history of the world should reflect that event.

Interrelation: The CK should decide how the deities relate to one another and to the mundane world. Do the gods war with one another or are they all equal and sit about paying attention to their own needs? Do they fight proxy wars through humans, or do they bet on the destruction of particular races or places? How do the deities treat humans (if at all) or the various races found in the world? Are their souls, and if so how, do the deities treat them and where do they go after the death of a person? These are all questions the CK should address.

Locality: Are deities local in nature? Do deities have specific areas they move and within which they act? Local deities can be very powerful or almost benign. There can be deities with a worldwide reach, while others may exist in only a city. Addressing locality gives the CK a great breadth of latitude in creating pantheons and allowing those pantheons to impact various cultures and peoples. If a dwarven deity actually resided or acted in a particular chain of mountains then the likelihood that dwarves would actually dwell in the mountain is rather high. Different peoples can worship different deities, and these people and deities, can interact with each other in differing manners. The CK must consider all these particulars when they create the religion and the deities that occupy it.

Impact: The impact of a religion refers to the actual interaction of a deity or deities with the world. Do the gods involve themselves in the day to day affairs of man or not? Do they use men as proxies in their interrelations with one another or the world and its heroes? The real world impact is very important for the Castle Keeper in establishing the tenor of his campaign setting. The impact can be great or small, as the gods may not even care about the world in which they reside or rule over.

Where the gods reside is also an interesting question and one which the CK should at least create some idea. If the gods actually reside in the world, they probably interact with it on a regular basis but if they don't they may have a very different manner of interacting with the world.

However, all things considered, the religions still serve the simple purposes of conveying the god's desires onto man and methods of living within that society or culture and the expectations of its individuals.

Rituals

Rituals are an important part of any society. These include celebrations, sacrifices, donations, houses of worship, methods, and means of worship, etc. Simple rituals go a long way to defining a culture. They might include the sacrifice of animals, humans, gems, plants, or any number of articles as mandatory donations to churches, organizations, or houses of worship. In part, the rituals should reflect the deities concerns and the other part the capacity of the members to fulfill their desires. Rituals exist to influence the powers of the supernatural. Whether simple planting rituals or large sale sacrificial rituals used to prevent the coming of the next apocalypse, they serve to influence the deities. Rituals, properly observed, ***should*** influence the deities.

THE PHYSICAL WORLD AND ART

Often cultures have homogenous architecture and modes of artistic expression. When one see a piece of Maya calligraphy, one knows it is Mayan, so unique is it in the world. The pyramids in Egypt, Central America, and Southeast Asia garner the same response, instant identification, and reference to the creating culture. Each type possesses unique architectural qualities. During the middle age, the ubiquitous cathedral with soaring buttresses distinguishes a time and lace of construction.

Cultures should be unique in the respect of expressing themselves artistically, poetically, in music and architecture. This can be in the most benign of buildings, such as farmsteads or barns, if they even have barns, to the most grandiose of structures such as temples and government edifices. Even those structures which cross cultural boundaries have unique flares and style such as castle walls. Those built by the Romans are significantly different from those built by the English of the high middle age as to garner them instantly recognizable. When creating various cultural regions, be sure to incorporate these elements into the scheme of that culture. Do not hesitate to borrow from our own history and mishmash the expressive qualities of any and all cultures if the setting calls for it.

It is important to note that architecture often reflects both the religious culture of the society and the climate within which that society exists. One is not likely to find open villas, with baths and pools in a semi-arctic region. Nor is one likely to find thickly walled, wooden structures in tropical environments.

TABLE 6.5 BIOMES AND ARCHITECTURE

Biome	Typical Architecture
Tropical Moist Climates (Rainforest)	Timber, Matting, Open, Conical Roofs, High Ceiling
Wet-Dry Tropical Climates (Savanna)	Wattle & Daub*, Matting, Enclosed, Low Ceiling
Dry Tropical Climate (Desert)	Stone, Adobe, Brick, Enclosed, Low Ceiling
Dry Mid-latitude Climate (Steppe)	Wood, Sod, Earth, Open, Low Ceiling
Mediterranean Climate (Chaparral)	Stone, Adobe, Open, Long, High Ceiling
Dry Mid-latitude Climate (Grassland)	Sod, Wattle, Wattle & Daub, Enclosed, Low Ceiling
Moist Continental Climate (Deciduous Forest)	Timber, Stone, Wattle, Enclosed, Long, Low Ceiling
Boreal Forest Climate (Taiga)	Wattle & Daub, Matting, Open, High Ceiling
Tundra Climate (Tundra)	Stone, Brick, Timber, Matting, High Ceiling
Highland Climate (Alpine)	Stone, Timber, Enclosed, Long, High Ceiling

* Wattle & Daub is a type of clay and mud.

The same goes of the artistic elements of a culture. Do they paint on canvas, create statues, are they blocky as in Egypt, fluid as in Romanesque Europe, amorphic as in many African cultures? The possibilities are endless.

VALUE SYSTEMS

All cultures have value systems. These value systems include ideas of right and wrong, proper etiquette and behavior and expectations of how social interaction should take place. The systems are tied into religious systems, legal systems, political institutions, and artistic expression. The Castle Keeper should have a basic idea of what the value system of their culture is. It should be made pointedly clear that for a value system to work, the majority of people must follow it the majority of the time and people should minimally benefit from the value system in some small way. This does not mean that everyone benefits but that some do and that the majority do not suffer under it. If the latter were the case, the system would not work.

In **Castles & Crusades**, a basic value system exists via alignment. However, alignment can only confer so much information and fails to fully address society's potential values because of the spectrum of issues that need addressing. Also, alignment functions more to address the manner in which people address their value system rather than to set a value system.

For example, consider a nomadic society with a warrior caste who garners the vast majority of their goods through plunder. For them, the attacking and slaughter of villagers, monks or knights, is of little moral concern, as they do not differentiate between them as worthy opponents or acceptable opponents. The attacks by these people may seem to others as wanton and senseless slaughter yet its members may be lawful within their own value system. To others, this may seem chaotic. To them, it is the person who does not follow with the warrior/raider ethic and bypasses potential loot because the defenders are villagers that seem chaotic. Compare that to a society with a warrior caste which values a fair fight with opponents of equal capacity. These warriors would not attack unarmed peasants and if they did many would consider them chaotic or evil.

Value systems are wide ranging in their nature and the Castle Keeper should give a little thought to these systems in order to create a coherent and workable culture.

HOW TO BUILD A CULTURE

This is a little simpler than one might think, at least the generalities which suffice for most role playing games. Most gaming environments occur in a pseudo-medieval world based upon Europe in the Middle ages. One need simply look no further than texts about the middle ages to find almost all the information necessary to build a culture. Simply pick a region of Europe and use that region as the palinpsest for your culture. For each region of your world, do the same.

This method has the bonus of being both easy and offering an anchor point for players. It is easier for them to act in expected manners and understand what is expected from them as the middle ages still linger in our collective memory. In essence, it is not completely foreign to the Castle Keeper and players.

This also provides a certain level of cohesiveness to the gaming environment that may not otherwise exist. Typically one would choose a geographic region and work from that. The regions could be small, such as that of the mercantile city-states of northern Italy, to as broad as Charlemagne's Carolingian Empire. The only significant point to be addressed in these instances would be the impact of any mythology upon the setting itself, but as the whole of medieval Europe interacted with hosts of methodological constructs, from the Vikings in the North, to Celts, Romans, Islam, Cathars, and beyond, it is not a far leap of faith to create a setting based on northern French Feudal states where the religion rests upon the worship of the All Father.

Historical epochs are not incompatible. The Greek Hoplite might seem an odd fit with the English Longbowmen or the Egyptian Charioteer with the French Knight, but in a world where fantasy elements such as magic dominate, it is no large leap of faith for different peoples locked in different epochs to dwell together. The Greek Hoplite Phalanx and bronze armor became a thing of the past because the Romans ability to fight in echelons and their use of light cavalry proved more maneuverable, not because it was a wholly untenable armor and tactic. The Roman's developed double cuirassed armor on their shoulders in order to better protect the clavicle from damage from downward slashing barbarian swords. This did not make the slashing sword a useless weapon. However, the whole question becomes moot once magic is considered; magic changes the dynamic of historical and technological development, in effect replacing innovation with a wholly different construct.

Example: The Tageans of Aihrde migrated with the great mass people from the ruins of the Solariam Empire. They broke from their cousins, the Brindisi, and traveled to the northern islands

that lie in the Sea of Shenal. They built open cities there and called to their gods. They fashioned armor of bronze, donned great round shields for battle, and carried short, curved blades as their main armament. Large helms, plumed with horse-hair, dyed red, gave their battle phalanx a horrid appearance. Clerics traveled with them in battle, securing their open flanks with god-borne sorcery in case of flanking attacks. Mostly they warred with the pirates of Onwaltig, wild orcs astride huge ships of wood and iron. These orcs used bows, scimitars, and often rode large wolves in battle. But to the north lay the Kingdom of Aachen with whom the Tageans had an uneasy peace; those knights, borne to war in chainmail, with shields and lances, were terrible to behold on the field of battle.

Here we have Greek type Hoplites, French Knights, and Caribbean Pirates all in the same playing arena with no problems of integration.

Once this method has been tried, the process of culture 'cherry picking' become easy and one need but pick up any anthropology text and read about some cultures and transport its elements to the world being designed. Expanding to other cultures such as the Feudal Japanese or the Mayan Empire becomes easy.

Another thing to consider when designing your culture and urban landscapes is that it must work, by this it is meant to physically work. A functioning society must depend upon the essential productivity of its inhabitants. To grow and prosper, a culture, city or people must be able to meet or exceed their caloric needs. For this to happen, farmers and herdsmen must be more safe than not. More food must reach a city than not, reliable governments capable of more organizing principles than not must exist. Imagine a world with bandits everywhere who stole more than half the goods produced by farmers or tradesmen. That society would simply cease to function. More people must be honest than dishonest. More people must be good than bad. More people should at least remain at a stable level of social structure than be shifted down. Societies that cannot manage this collapse, and once collapse begins, it is difficult to stop. Choose your setting wisely. Choose a culture to meet your campaign desires or needs.

LANGUAGE

One of the most important foundations for culture creation is the development of a language and bringing that into the game. Mood and tone is easy to capture when it comes to language, harsh languages such as German can conjure in the minds of most people a dark and brooding world. Soft spoken, pitched high, such as Chinese, conjure images of civilization, pomp, and circumstance. To help capture the mood of a setting, and better bring in the characters into the setting itself, and the game, the CK should pay careful attention to the language of the area and as it manifests in the place and NPC names.

Too often fantasy settings, worlds, and campaigns fall apart on place names and words that are obviously a simple refutation of letters randomly gathered from some text. The result of such efforts is predictable. The town of Sihwcidh is filled with orcs and led by the warlord Kidpa'a. Though that might sound believable, it rapidly breaks down after several more place names are used and the utter randomness of the setting comes to light.

There are several methods of creating a language, creating a new one, pillaging an existing one, morphing existing languages. A language allows for a more immediate immersive experience in a world. Languages, properly used, can help to bridge that divide from disbelief to belief.

The easiest method and the preferred method is pillaging an existing language. Should one choose this route, for each cultural region your world has, choose a language from the real world, e.g. Russian, English, German, or Chinese, and transport it into your setting. Use the names (or slight derivations of them) for place names, NPC names and character names (at least for those who come from that region). This gives the Castle Keeper a sense of completeness for the setting. When the names and terms sound familiar, they come to appear as though they belong and do not cause serious disjoints in the story telling.

Current languages on Earth are derived from a root language, and thus many languages have similarities. For example, Spanish, English, Russian, German, and French, all have similar constructs. All of them are derived from the Indo-European root tongue. When deciding upon languages, one must build in a slight history of the region of the area to decide which languages go where and why. Significant language junctures such as between Russian and Chinese, who border one another, have much to do with historical reasons that usually involve terrain.

Another method is to bring two or more languages together. In this case, it is best to bring similar languages together such as Polish, Czech and Russian, or Italian and Spanish, or German and Swedish. Combining disparate languages like Arabic and English would prove problematic and disjunctive. Bring words and elements from the various languages together and form a new language. By combining the basic elements of a language group or languages, one can create an entire lexicon and even begin speaking in that language.

As with the previous example, be sure to use the words and elements consistently for place names and character names.

For example, in my home world, I have two basic language groups for humans. One is a Germanic tongue and the other is an Italian/Spanish mix. In one language, berg is used for town/city and the in the other town/city is translated as via.

Creating your own language is difficult and time consuming but can be very fun. Keep careful notes as the language develops, building simple grammatical constructs for things such as plural or past tense. Be sure to make notes and build a dictionary. Though not easy by any stretch of the imagination, it can be fun and in the end give your setting a wholly unique atmosphere.

URBAN COMMUNITIES

In pre-industrial societies, the vast majority of the population was given over to agricultural pursuits. Scholars estimate that for every one person engaged in a non-agricultural pursuit, nine farmers worked in food acquisition to support him. That is, 90-95% of all peoples in pre-industrial societies were involved in agricultural pursuits of one type or another. In primitive societies, everyone was involved in some type of agricultural pursuit. Even chiefs would hunt and gather food for their family or for feasts.

When designing any setting with humans, keep these numbers in mind. A hamlet that houses one tavern with 5 people who run it would have at least 50 people who work in the agricultural producing sector. Often, small villages and hamlets would consist wholly of farmers. Inhabitants could and would take on different roles within the community, but their primary occupation was farming. For example a thorp with a population of 30 adults chooses a leader to speak for them with the local power structures and warrior elite, but that leader would also be a herdsman, hunter, or farmer. His official duties might interfere with his farming job, but would only supplant farming if there were enough people to support him in that position. Few pre-industrial societies could afford to have many people in non-farming roles. For societies to expand, for cities to grow in size, and specialists such as mill workers and goldsmiths to prosper, some type of precursor had to happen. Farming became more productive and transportation eased and increased. Farming communities sprouted up and grew, morphing into larger towns able to produce excess food, which in turn could flood local markets with food. Those local markets became attractants for power; usually the warrior elite. Successful markets were those built in areas that allowed easy transportation to and from great distances, along river routes or well worn trails. Around these markets, urban centers began growing, for here the locals conducted an ever-greater volume of trade, and labor became more specialized generating yet more attractants to the market and wealth for the community that in turn spurred more growth. But always around these large urban cities, any available land was put to the plow to feed the growing populations.

Design your urban landscape accordingly, for large metropolises, cities, and towns were often surrounded by dozens if not hundreds of thorps and villages, and yeoman farmers all working to supply the needs of those in the city who were not involved in agricultural pursuits.

Location

In pre-industrial cultures, large cities and towns usually grow up along waterways. Not only was this to meet the water needs of the city or town but also because movement of goods over rivers and along the coastline was easier, more efficient, cheaper, and more reliable. Furthermore, the waterway made shipping in greater volumes possible and at a lower cost than over land. Only much later, as the nature of transportation changed did urban cities of any significant size develop off the waterways.

Obviously in fantasy campaigns where magic dominates, it is not beyond the realm of the possible that magic enables people to dwell off these courses, but such communities would be dependent on the magic and the power that it brings in order to maintain their city. This constant magic must have a source, in either the local temple, or a powerful magic user.

Population density

In pre-industrial societies, the vast majority of the population is involved in agricultural pursuits of one sort or another. They live in small communities, depending upon their local political situation of between 40 and 500 people. The thorps, hamlets, and villages were almost always ruled over by a local baron, lord, oligarch, theocrat, or from some power center in a town or city.

The dispersion of people over the landscape varies from place to place and often reflects the terrain they dwell in, as reflected in the biome, climate, and physical geography as well as the nature of the states and how they conduct warfare. In highly militaristic societies with endemic warfare, people tend to drift into large communities for safety's sake, whereas during periods of calm or relative peace, people tend to drift into smaller communities and spread out over the landscape.

Another factor concerning population density is the fertility of the soil or forest as considered by huntsmen and fishermen involved in those agricultural pursuits. In highly fertile regions, people pack in more densely and the ratio of farmers to trades people shifts somewhat from 9:1 to 8:1. Beyond the 8:1 stage, massive and revolutionary farming techniques that produce vast quantities of food are necessary.

In a medieval fantasy setting, the only mitigating factor for humans is magic, as industrial farming and chemical farming do not yet exist. A cleric can create food and water. Imagine if he were to do this once a day. Imagine if anyone could become a cleric or even nearly anyone. One cleric can create and sustain enough food for 3 people for a day. At the second level, this increases to six people and at **3rd level** this increases to nine people. That is, one **3rd level** cleric can sustain, with food and water, nine people a year.

Consider, in a population of 500, if one has 10 clerics that is at least 30 people freed up by the clerics from agricultural use. If the clerics actually focused on food production with an average of 3 spells per cleric and few upper level spell casters, they could feed well over 100 people, bringing the average of agricultural worker to craftsmen way down. Five clerics would only be 1% of the total population. Two or three clerics would be less than 1% of the population. In any respect the impact on the balance of population and production is great. This is not necessarily a bad thing and may not have much impact on the way you envision your world, but by managing this somehow the Castle Keeper may find ways of keeping magic under control or limiting its use thus keeping the fantastic, fantastic and heroes, heroes.

Note: In **C&C** this use of the cleric does not reflect the classes' actual makeup nor its deity's designs upon the character as discussed in **Chapter 2** above.

Example: For a large metropolis to exist, a massive city of 500,000 people - very rare in ancient or medieval times - needs 4,500,000 people to support it.

For density of classes in various populations, see **Chapter 4**.

Community Size

These are roughly the sizes of various communities.

TABLE 6.6 URBAN CENTER STATISTICS

Habitation	Size	Militia	Men-at-Arms	Residential Houses
Thorp	@40	4	0	5-10
Hamlet	@200	20	2	25-30
Village	@500	50	5	60-70
Town	@2,000	200	20	300-400
City	@10,000	1,000	100	1,600-1,700
Metropolis	@20,000+	2,000	200	3,300-3,400

Within these populations, family sizes are very important for determining the number of houses within any given community. The average medieval family size was eight people spread out over three generations. This means in a thorp of 40 people and an average family size of eight there would be five houses with attendant barns or structures. This is not many people or buildings. It is a bare blip on the map. Rural communities tend to have larger families than do urban communities. In an urban community, one should reduce family or structure occupation density by 20% or in this case to around six in towns, cities, and metropolises. For example, in a city of 10,000, there would be 1,600-1,700 residential type buildings ranging from the poorest houses to the palaces.

Outside of cities, the density of people per square mile is usually dependent upon soil fertility, proximity to water, and current political situation. So one might find an average of 5 people per square mile in a low density area or as many as 100 per square mile in a high density area.

Highly productive land will support a lot of people, perhaps one person per acre. Because most land area is a mixed jumble of productive and non-productive land, from river flood plains to heat scorched steppe, lets assume the middle ground where we have 3 people per acre.

Example: Returning to our metropolis, for a population of a city of 500,000, that's 1.5 million acres of land for them and another 7 million acres to support those supporting them, making 10 million acres of land turned over to the plow to support that city. That's for highly productive areas. In low productive areas, this can be as little as 20 acres per person. Needless to say, that's a lot of land under the plow. The characters will be traveling through vast swathes of agricultural communities.

For these communities to actually function as supply nodes for that city, they have to be safe and productive.

The CK should take care when designing the world so that its population is not so great that it becomes overwhelmingly crowded. Farmlands, beasts, and other manifestations of agriculture moving 1 mile down a road is utterly irksome in that the only encounters or adventures that the characters are likely to run across are farmers missing their cows, dogs barking, and the proverbial chicken trying to figure out whether it should cross the road.

Within the confines of a civilized community, the characters will be traveling through a lot of well-tended organized towns and villages. While this setup is perfectly acceptable, it should not be the dominant aspect of the landscape. Cities are rare and the metropolis very rare. Towns and villages are common and dot the landscape, clinging to rivers and streams and thorps here and there in the wilderness, or more likely clustered toward the larger urban centers.

The Militia

A militia is an informal military unit usually composed of local citizens with little or no military training. The city government, whatever that may be, either presses citizens into service or requires them to serve for certain periods of time, or serve at a leader's whim. A militia is a unit of last resort for most leaders as they are very unreliable and poorly trained and organized. The militia's size is dependent upon the size of the community. In general, 1 in 10 people serve in the militia. In times of extreme duress, all adult males can be called up, but this could have disastrous effects on a community if they serve for more than a month or two or suffer heavy losses.

The average militiaman has 1d6 hit points, an armor class of 10, and attacks with a -4 penalty on to hit rolls. If the militia is trained to use their weapons, the -4 penalty no longer applies. Trained militia also may have better weapons and armor.

TABLE 6.7 MILITIA SIZE PER COMMUNITY

Habitation	Size	Militia	Men-at-Arms
10,000 Thorp	@40	4	0
10,000 Hamlet	@200	20	2
1,000 Village	@600	50	5
100 Town	@2,000	200	20
10 City	@10,000	1,000	100
1 Metropolis	@20,000+	2,000	200

Communities

In almost every case, when dealing with smaller communities, people undertake multiple tasks such as collecting wood, farming, fishing, and hunting as well as their primary undertaking (fishing, mining, etc.). Most people would have their own garden, even if primarily herdsmen, such that almost all families could supply themselves with food.

Communities need water, so there is usually a water source, whether a well or a river, nearby or within the community. They also tend to develop more quickly if on a trade route. Except

in highly civilized areas, communities tend to cluster together so that within a few dozen miles of one village there will be several hamlets and thorps. In highly civilized areas, this trend reverses and communities tend to disperse. When designing a region, place a moderately sized village near the central water source, surround it with 1d10 hamlets, all placed within a day or two travel from the village. Next, place 1d10 thorps in the area as well. The number of thorps need not be greater than the number of hamlets; the sizes of these towns are as often accidental as planned and they ebb and flow with the current state of events.

Villages should be spaced 1 to 6 days travel apart from one another. Densely settled areas should be more closely spaced, with villages a day or two apartr. Large stretches of land, unoccupied, exist between the clusters of villages and towns. The easiest method of settling this begins with city/town or village placement and general idea of density for a community.

The following set of tables explores the size of various urban centers and their occupations, from the single family dwelling to the metropolis. For random determination, roll on the appropriate die listed in column 1 to determine who lives in any given house or building. For the number of buildings in any given community, refer to **Table 6.6 Urban Center Statistics** above. These tables are for random generation and encounters but also represent the percentage of occupants in any given domicile in each urban center.

Single Dwellings

Inhabitants: 1-10

This refers to those lone farms and settlements where one person, a small group, or family resides. They exist outside any thorp, hamlet, or village and at least 1 mile from them. These types of dwellings are primarily within the confines of civilized regions without endemic warfare, brigandry, or raiding. They exist along frontier regions but are rare in such areas.

TABLE 6.8A SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING

D10	Inhabitants
1-3	Single person
4-6	Family (1d8 members)
7-10	Group (1d10 members)

TABLE 6.8B OCCUPATIONS OF INHABITANTS

D10	Occupation
1-9	Agriculture, raw material gathering, miners, woodsmen, etc.
10	Others, such as brigands, rebels, outcast, etc.

Thorp

Inhabitants: 20-80 (2d4x10); **per household:** 1d10

This refers to small communities, families, or individuals who live very close to one another. A thorp can be found in nearly every civilized community but they are rarely found in those regions suffering endemic warfare or brigandry. They tend to cluster in lands undergoing settlement and along major and minor trade routes. They are very dispersed along border regions. They tend to cluster near villages, towns, and cities for safety. Thorps are almost always farming communities, raw material gathering communities, or serve one function, such as the houses, homes, and farms of people assigned to guard a bridge. There are rarely any government representatives in a thorp. Only on very rare occasions would a thorp have a specialist in any occupation.

TABLE 6.8C THORP

D10	Inhabitants
1	Single person
2-9	Family
10	Group

TABLE 6.8D OCCUPATION OF INHABITANTS

D10	Occupation
1-4	Agriculture/fishing
5-7	Herdsmen
8	Wood gatherer
9	Mining or raw material gathering
10	Common Occupation*

*See below Common Occupations & Businesses.

Hamlet

Inhabitants: 100-400 (1d4)x10; **per Household:** 1d10

The hamlet is the predominant settlement size for nearly all regions of any civilization. These are communities of several dozen families, groups, or individuals living in one community. They gather in these communities for safety and mutual support. Hamlets have a variety of individuals or groups skilled enough to support themselves, although it is rare that they have craftsman whose sole support base is their craft. Occasionally, these communities are walled or have hedge-walls. This is more prevalent in turbulent areas and less so in more settled regions. The inhabitants are primarily involved in agricultural pursuits, though some hamlets have a more focused mining or raw material gathering focus. Hamlets on major trade routes often have inns or taverns. These communities often have community buildings as well such as a mill, storehouse, or trade-house, a religious structure or even a government official living in them.

TABLE 6.8E HAMLET

D20	Inhabitants
1-4	Single Person
5-15	Family
16-19	Group
20	Representative*

* This refers to a religious authority, government authority, guild authority or other official.

TABLE 6.8F OCCUPATIONS OF INHABITANTS

D12	Occupation of Inhabitants
1-4	Agriculture/fishing
5-8	Herdsman
9	Wood gatherer
10	Mining or raw material gathering
11	Common Occupation*
12	Official

*See below Common Occupations & Businesses.

Village

Inhabitants: 1000- 4000 (1d4x1000, 10% chance for +1d10x100 people); **Household:** 1d8

This is the predominate urban feature for most pre-industrial societies. The village is of such size that it contains those whose primary function is not agricultural, though in total the vast majority of the occupants are still agriculturally based. The village supports dozens of hamlets, thorps, and individual settlements and can often supply most of their needs. The village is the place where markets are organized. Official institutions are almost always located in villages, as opposed to hamlets or thorps. Villages often possess walls with those in the interior of settled regions less often, while those on the fringes of a settled region more so. They are nominally well defended by the local power structures should the village be in an important location. They are capable of raising militias, have small standing forces of men-at-arms, and serve as the social, political and economic center for much of their surrounding area.

TABLE 6.8G VILLAGE

D20	Inhabitants *
1-4	Single Person
5-14	Family
15-18	Group
19-20	Representative**

*Every village has at least one government authority or representative.

** This refers to a religious authority, government authority, guild authority or other official.

TABLE 6.8H OCCUPATION OF INHABITANTS

D12	Occupation
1-4	Agriculture/fishing
5-7	Herdsmen
8	Wood gatherer
9	Mining or raw material gathering
10-11	Common Occupation*
12	Official**

*See below Common Occupations & Businesses.

** This refers to special buildings such as a religious shrine, mill house or other. See official buildings below.

Town

Inhabitants: 2,000-8,000 (2d4 x1,000, 10% chance for 1d4x1,000 more); **per Household:** 1d8

The town is essentially a very large village that has a support base of numerous other villages, hamlets, and thorps, such that it allows for the presence of a higher percentage of specialized occupations and even production centers. The town is, by and large, the dominant type of community through which authorities exert influence over their populace. They always have an official presence, with representatives from the leadership, courts (if any), markets, and fairs, militia, standing soldiery, etc. Most towns possess some type of fortifications or have the presence of fortifications, towers, or castles within the town or very nearby. Those towns on the periphery of civilized lands tend to be more highly militarized than those in the interior regions. The community is also well supported by outlying thorps and villages, such that a higher percentage of its inhabitants are engaged in specialized occupations and common occupations.

TABLE 6.8I TOWN

D20	Inhabitants*
1-2	Single Person
3-12	Family
13-17	Group
18-20	Representative**

*Every town has at least one government authority or representative per 1,000 inhabitants.

** This refers to a religious authority, government authority, guild authority or other official.

TABLE 6.8J OCCUPATION OF INHABITANTS

D12	Occupation d12
1-4	Agriculture/fishing
5-6	Herdsman
7	Wood gatherer
8	Mining or raw material gathering
9-10	Common Occupation*
11	Specialized Occupation*
12	Official**

*See below Common Occupations & Businesses.

** This refers to special buildings such as a religious shrine, mill house or other. See official buildings below.

City

Inhabitants: 9,000-16,000 (1d8+8x1,000, 10% chance for 1d4 x1,000 more); **Household:** 1d8

The city is rare in the pre-industrial world. A large number of villages and thorps are needed to support a city. These massive communities are very important cultural and political nodes for any society and are often the largest population aggregates one finds in many thousands of miles. There simply is not enough agricultural output to sustain many of these localities. They

are important political centers with local and regional nobility, standing militias, city guards, professional soldiery, merchant and other guilds and religious authorities are located in them. Cities usually exert regional authority (though this is not always the case) and almost always have many satellite communities under their control. The size of a city should not be considered a detriment to the power of those who rule from within. Small cities may house powerful monarchs who can call up troops from a vast region. Cities also are large enough to support a large variety of common and specialist occupations while relying on its food from outside sources. They often lie on major trade routes, river courses, or are located amidst very fertile regions.

TABLE 6.8K CITY

D20	Inhabitants*
1-4	Single Person
5-13	Family
14-17	Group
18-20	Representative**

*Every city has at least one government authority or representative per 1000 inhabitants.

** This refers to a religious authority, government authority, guild authority or other official.

TABLE 6.8L OCCUPATION OF INHABITANTS

D12	Occupation
1-3	Agriculture/fishing
4	Herdsman
5	Mining or raw material gathering
6-8	Common occupation
9-11	Specialized occupation*
12	Official**

*See Occupation list below for common or specialized occupations as appropriate.

** This refers to special buildings such as a religious shrine, mill house or other. See official buildings below.

Metropolis

Inhabitants: 20,000 – 1,000,000 (total regional pop x. 05 excluding population of the metropolis); **per Household:** 1d8

Communities this size are rare in pre-industrial societies. It takes a staggering population size to support a metropolis of over 20,000 people and fulfill all its various needs. However, they do occur. These are the seats of major powers whose influence can spread many thousands of miles. It rules over many hundreds of towns and thousands of villages. They will, with rare exceptions, house significant military forces, but will always have city guard, to include police and a highly organized city structure and management. They must be placed along major water ways (often the sea, with large ports) and amidst a large trade route. They have to have access to highly developed agricultural communities and organizations for distributing food (the market rarely served this in pre-industrial societies). The majority of the city's occupants are poor with a significant amount of special and common craftsmen found therein.

A metropolis should have a population support in the millions. In a highly efficient society, 20 million people could possibly support a 1 million-person metropolis should all other factors for support be present as well. In an average productive society, it may take up to 60 million people to support a metropolis of 1 million or more. In low efficiency societies it is unlikely there would be any metropolis.

TABLE 6.8M METROPOLIS

D20	Inhabitants*
1-4	Single Person
5-11	Family
12-17	Group
18-20	Representative**

*Every village has at least one government authority or representative.

** This refers to a religious authority, government authority, guild authority or other official.

TABLE 6.8N OCCUPATION OF INHABITANTS

D12	Occupation
1	Agriculture/fishing
2	Herdsman
3	Raw material gatherer
4-8	Common occupation
9-11	Special occupation*
12	Official**

*See Occupation list below for common or specialized occupations as appropriate.

** This refers to special buildings such as a religious shrine, mill house, or other. See official buildings below.

FORTRESSES

This refers to those fortifications not directly associated or a part of the above described communities. Fortresses are rather common in a highly militarized or conflict ridden society or region. Fortresses are of varying sizes and even functions. Some simply house the local nobility, unable to withstand major assaults, while the purposes of others are to withstand massive sieges for extended periods of time. They always house soldiery. It does not, however, take very many soldiers to defend most fortifications, often very low numbers of defenders are present at any given time. Only on rare occasions or in the case of massive city-wide fortifications did the fortress defenses house large troop concentrations. Fortresses are often located near town, villages, or hamlets as they not only need their support but those villages and hamlets depend on the fort for help in time of conflict.

The CK should give some thought to the placement of fortresses, keeping in mind their specific purposes. Consider the locale and the nature of the society one is placing the fortresses in to determine what type and size of fortification. For example, fortresses are common in fractured societies suffering endemic warfare, while in more settled lands they may primarily be

located along the frontiers. Smaller fortresses often line trade or pilgrimage routes, while larger ones overlook major arties of communication and frontier regions. The fortress should have a local supply base, or if built in a wilderness area, possessed of a method of resupply. The size and type of the garrison would also be dependent upon the purpose of the fortress as well.

Fortress Purpose

Before placing your fortress, first determine its purpose. There are four basic categories listed below. Each category is given a number, allowing the CK to randomly determine the type of fortification encountered. The definition follows.

TABLE 6.9 FORTRESS PURPOSE

D4	Purpose	Explanation	Garrison
1	Local protection	Guard static local populations	Footmen, archers
2	Trade route protection	Guard bridges, roads	Footmen, archers, horse
3	Frontier protection*	Guard terrain, rivers, borders	Footmen, archers, horse
4	Home for Noble or Lord	Safety for noble and family	Footmen, archers, horse

*The frontier does not only equate to the "unsettled" or "wilderness" lands, but also to border regions between states, countries, etc.

Fortress Types

There are many type of fortifications and as many variances. A wooden palisade could surround a keep or tower. Houses built abutting a castle wall extend, and weaken the castle's defensive abilities. Almost all have an internal source for water through a stream or well. They tend to occupy the high ground in the area and often use the terrain in their construction. Unless built for the specific purpose of pacifying a wilderness area, their location is generally on a trade route, river, etc.

Fortified Military Camp: Most commonly used by the Romans. These rectangular camps possessed a wooden palisade or earth rampart, usually with a ditch surrounding the whole enclosure. They almost always have four gates, one facing on each end of the wall. More permanent fortified camps have towers on each corner of the camp, able to bear the weight of small catapults or ballista. Further improvements replace the wooden palisade with stone walls; these range up to 12 feet high and several feet thick. They have multiple sources of ladders allowing entry to the wall walk. Fortified military camps do not have parapets, or crenellated battlements.

Motte and Bailey: These fortifications consisted of a central keep or donjon placed on top of a raised mound or small hill. A ditch dug around the mound or hill served as a defensive bastion; it was filled with water or bramble as available. The Bailey consists of a set of walls, usually made of timber, built around the ditch, providing another layer of security. Motte and Bailey fornications were primarily made of wood, but many converted to stone over time. These served as military posts as much as castles.

Keep or Tower: A small defensive building, made of stone, that was usually 40 feet tall with thick walls. The Keep was often surrounded by a moat or wall of some type or placed in a highly defensible area such as the middle of a lake, either on an island or built from the water, or on a section of high ground only accessible by a single path. Keeps possessed walls up to 8 feet thick, built of two concentric walls, an inner and outer. Between the walls sand or dirt was packed; this compacted earth absorbed many blows from stones or battering rams.

Castle: A fortification that serves as both a defense post and houses a noble or lord. The castle is different from the fortified military camp in that its scope was limited to regional protection and was designed as a permanent residence for the family. The castle usually evolved from a motte and bailey or keep-type fortification. The timber walls of the bailey were replaced by stone curtain-type walls. Battlements with wall walks were added. The ditch, if present, was expanded and walled. Finally, a gate house was constructed over all the entry points.Castles added cellars that housed the castle's food, wine, armaments, tools, and other paraphernalia required by the local lord. Castles ranged from very small, to very large.

Greater Castle: These castles incorporate all the elements of a normal castle, though their purpose was primarily military control of a whole region. Greater castles overlook river intersections, trade routes, and lie on frontiers. They incorporate vast sprawling fortifications that house large garrisons of men, with all the supplies, food, and water needed to maintain a certain level of security.

City Fortification: Cities within turbulent areas almost always fortify themselves with long curtain walls that surround the entire city. These walls offer crenellated battlements with towers interspersed regularly along the entire length of wall. Access to the walls lies through the towers or multiple steps and ladders built or set along the wall's course. They range in height and width by the wealth of the community. A fortified city may have a wooden palisade around it, or a double set of crenellated walls.

Garrison Size

The garrison comprises the soldiers, mercenaries, wizards, clerics, rangers, etc. who occupy and defend the fortress. The garrison does not include any civilians who may find themselves in the fortress or be attached to it in a non-military function, such as a cook or leather worker. Generally, most garrison soldiers multi-task in the work of outfitting the fortress, themselves, and the mundane daily tasks. The garrison numbers below do not include any nobles or their families that may occupy the fortress.

Small: Small garrisons comprise 8 men-at-arms and one garrison commander of 2nd or 3rd level. They are skilled in the use of their main weapon, usually a sword or axe. They generally wear scale or chainmail, helms, and carry shields. One, or two of them are trained crossbowmen, carrying a heavy crossbow and

wearing studded leather with steal pots. They occupy Keeps, Towers, Motte and Bailey Castles, and small Castles.

Medium: Medium garrisons comprise 20-60 men-at-arms, with 2 unit commanders of **2nd** or **3rd level**, and one garrison commander of **5th** to **6th level**. In these garrisons there are more specialists. A quarter of these men are lightly armed with both axe and sword, and leather armor. Their primary task is to dispatch wounded enemies, cut grapple ropes, tip ladders, man catapults, pour burning liquids, etc. Another quarter of these men are crossbowmen carrying a heavy crossbow and wearing studded leather with steel pots. The remainder are the garrison soldiers with swords, axes, halberds or bardiches, and wearing. scale or chain, helm and shield. They occupy large Keeps, Motte and Bailey Castles, and small Greater Castles.

Large: Large garrisons comprise 40-200 men-at-arms with up to 6 unit commanders of **2nd** or **3rd level**, a captain of soldiers at the **5th** or **6th level** and a garrison commander of **8th level**. A quarter of these men are lightly armed with both axe and sword, and leather armor. Their primary task is to dispatch wounded enemies, cut grapple ropes, tip ladders, main catapults, pour burning liquids, etc. Another quarter of these men are crossbowmen carrying a heavy crossbow and wearing studded leather with steel pots. The remainder are the regular garrison soldiers with swords, axes, halberds or bardiches, and wearing scale or chain, helm and shield. They occupy large Keeps, Motte and Bailey Castles, and small Greater Castles.

Very Large: Large garrisons comprise 200-1,000 men, commanded by scores of unit commanders of **2nd** or **3rd level** as well as 5-10 captains of **5th** or **6th level** and a garrison commander of **10th** or **12th level**. One quarter of these troops are specialized combat units of halbardiers for the defense of gates and streets, swordsmen for the defense of walls, archers and crossbowmen, and engineers to operate heavy siege engines and repair walls. One quarter are lightly armed with both axe and sword, and leather armor. Their primary task is to dispatch wounded enemies, cut grapple ropes, tip ladders, main catapults, pour burning liquids etc. Another quarter of these men are crossbowmen carrying a heavy crossbow and wearing studded leather with steel pots. The remainder are the garrison soldiers with swords, axes, halberds or bardiches and wearing scale or chain, helm and shield. They occupy Greater Castles, Fortified towns and cities, and Fortified Military Camps.

See **Chapter 4 NPCs** for a full description of garrison troops.

Terminology for Fortifications

Allure: Term used to describe the walkway behind the battlements.

Arrowslit: A narrow opening in a wall, tower, or crenel that allows defenders to shoot out with the maximum amount of protection.

Bastion: That section of the wall that juts out from the wall, but is similarly fortified with crenels, parapets, and wall walks. Sometimes referred to as the bulwark.

Battlements: Those sections of a defensive wall that allow for defenders to shoot out. The usually have wall walks, crenels and merlons.

Corbel: The supporting masonry or wood built beneath a bastion, parapet, or similar fortification. The corbel supports the weight of the fortification.

Crenel: A section of the battlement that is extended out into an embrasure, surrounded by walls, but possessed of an arrow slit or similar opening, allowing the defender to shoot out.

Curtain: A portion of the wall of any fortification; it may or may not have battlements upon it.

Machicolation: A section of the floor between the battlement and corbel that opens up, allowing the defenders to attack anyone assaulting the walls; the defenders often poured burning oil or boiling water through the machicolation.

Merlon: Extended sections of the parapet that offer protection from missiles and other attacks.

Murder Hole: A hole in the ceiling in which defenders can attack those assaulting the fortification. They were usually placed above a gate.

Parapet: A wall built upon another wall; the parapet allows protected access to the top of the wall.

Postern: A small gate located in the rear of a castle or keep.

Wall Walk: That section of the wall that allows passage from one section of the wall to another, through towers and into the crenels, usually protected by merlons.

OCCUPATIONS

The following lists contain commercial occupations found in villages, towns, cities, and metropolises. There is a list for common occupations (those most often found) and special occupations. The Castle Keeper is encouraged to develop occupations peculiar to their own setting such as those which might be involved in selling or making magic items, etc.

Common Occupations & Businesses

The following is a list of common occupations or businesses one might find in villages, towns, and occasionally hamlets. The list is by no means exclusive and the CK is encouraged to delve further into it. Also, on occasion, many businesses can be found in one locality or are combined into one such as an Inn that also serves as a butcher and farrier.

Ale House – a place where alcohol is served or sold
Bakery – a place where breads and pastries are sold
Boatwright – small watercraft are made (location specific)
Butcher – animals are prepared and sold as meats
Carpenter – rough articles of wood are made and sold for construction and the like
Farrier – a place where horses are cared for, horse shoes made, etc.
Fish Monger – a seller of fish (location specific)
Grocer – a place where staple foodstuffs are sold
Hostel – a public house for entertainment and lodging of travelers, often no food or drink is supplied
Inn – a place for lodging travelers, where drink and meals are often served, etc.
Potter – pottery is made and sold here

Poulterer – poultry is sold here (dead and alive)
Sawyer – a place that saws logs or timber

Special occupations & Businesses

These are occupations which are rare and are usually only found in larger cities. The list should provide a general framework from which a CK can establish a reasonable assortment of businesses for a city. The list is by no means exclusive and the CK is encouraged to add more as necessary or desired.

Abattoir – slaughter house
Accountant – accounting for other commercial endeavors
Apothecary – medicinal drugs are sold
Armorer – a place where armors are made and sold
Baiting pit – animal-fighting arena
Bank – a lending and saving institution
Barber – place for bathing and grooming, dental
Bath House – a place for baths
Blacksmith – a smithy for making metal goods
Bookshop – books are sold
Bowyer – bows and crossbows are made
Brass smith – a place where brass items are made and sold
Bronze foundry – bronze is cast and made into items or sale
Button maker – buttons, clasps and the like are made and sold
Carpenter (specialist) – carpenters who specialize in making particular objects of wood such as doors, frames, windows, plow, etc.
Carriage maker – a place where wagons and carriages are made, often specialized
Carter – a transportation shop where wagons are rented out, drivers are usually if not always supplied
Cartographer – a mapmaker
Cartwright – a place where simple carts are made and sold
Chandler – one who makes candles and the like
Cobbler – one who makes and repairs shoes
Coffee house – an establishment where rare drink items are sold. If one has coffee, then it is called a coffee house but can includes teas or other exotic drinks
Cook House – a place where meals are cooked, occasionally served, but often delivered
Cooper – a shop in which barrels are made
Copper smith – a place where copper is fashioned and sold
Cutler – a place for making, selling and repairing sharp edged instruments, usually knives
Dairy – a place where cheeses and the like are sold
Dance Hall – a public dancing area
Dentist – a place where teeth are cared for
Distillery – a place where liquors are made
Doctor – someone who specializes in the health care of others
Draper – a seller of cloth of all types, often this is specialized
Dress maker – a place where women's clothing is made and sold
Dry Goods – a place where textiles and other finished products are sold, often specialized
Exporter – a place where goods are sold for transport elsewhere
Falconer – hunting hawks and hunting birds are sold here and trained here
Fishmonger – one who buys and sells fish
Fletcher – a maker and seller of bows and arrows, often specialized
Fortuneteller – a place where fortunes are read via card, palm, etc
Fruitier – a place where fruits are sold
Fuller – a clothier who fulls clothing
Furrier – a place where firs and pelts are bought and sold
Gambling house – a place where gambling is allowed
Gaming house – a place where gaming takes place
Gemner – a place where gems and such are cut and sold
General store – a place where a wide variety of goods are sold
Glass blower – a place where items of glass are made and sold
Glover – a place where gloves are made and sold
Goldsmith – a place where gold is smelted and sold or made into finer objects
Haberdashery – a place where hats, ties, buttons and other finery are made and sold
Hair dresser – a place where one has one's hair arranged
Harness maker – a place where draft animal harnesses are sold
Hatter – a maker and seller of hats
Herbalist – a place where rare herbs are sold
Horse trader – a place to buy and sell horses
Hosier – a place where hosiery is sold (stockings and the like)
Importer – one who arranges for and sell imported items
Iron foundry – a place where iron is finished and sold in bulk weights
Iron monger – a place where iron goods are sold
Kennel – a place for keeping dogs or where dogs are sold, often specialized
Laundry – a place for washing one's clothing
Lawyer – a person who is appointed as an official and can represent people in legal cases
Leather shop – a place where leather goods are made and occasionally sold
Limner – a sign maker
Locksmith – one who specializes in the making and repairing of locks
Mason – a place where masons can be hired for use in building things
Money changer – denominations and monies are exchanged here
Notary – a place officially appointed where transactions are notarized and accounted for
Occultist – a place that sells goods for occult purposes
Painter – a place where painters are hired and paints sold
Pawn broker – a place where items are lent for a period of time and bought back perhaps
Perfumery – a place where perfumes are sold
Pewter smith – a place where pewter is made and goods sold
Playhouse – a usually a public place where plays are held
Plumber – pipes and the likes are installed for hire
Public house – a saloon
Rat killing arena – a place where dogs kill rats for sport
Rope maker – a place where rope is made
Saddler – a place where saddles and harnesses are made
Scrivener – a copyist or professional public writer
Seamstress – a place where household items of cloth are made and sold
Shoe maker – shoes are made and sold here
Silversmith – silver is smelted and made into items of fine make
Slater – a place where a specialist works in slate
Stable – a place where animals are lodged and fed

Stable and livery – a place where horses and animals are for rent
Surgeon – medical specialist
Swordsmith – a place where weapons are made or repaired
Tailor – outer garments are made and sold and altered here
Tanner – hides and skins are turned into leather here
Tavern – a place where food drink and lodging are to be had
Teahouse – a place where teas are sold
Thatcher – a place where thatch roof makers can be hired
Tiler – a place where tiles for roofing are made
Tinker – a unspecialized fixer or maker of small common items
Tin Smith – tin items are made, repaired and sold here
Trader – a place where items of various nature are traded and sold
Wagoner – a place where wagons are rented out with drivers and items transported
Wainwright – wagons are made and repaired here
Weapons smith – common weapons are made and repaired here
Weaver – cloth is made here
Wheelwright – wheels for wagons and other purposes are made and sold here
Wine merchant – wine is made and sold here
Wire drawer – metal wire is made and sold here

Buildings

The following list is a sampling of types of buildings found in towns, villages, or cities. It is unlikely to find these dwellings in thorps or hamlets. Beyond the tavern and or small temple, such urban areas are too small to house and support large specialized buildings and occupations.

Abbey – a place that houses a monastery and abbot
Acropolis – fortified part of a city
Alcazar – a fortress or palace
Basilica – a place for carrying out legal issues
Bishop's palace – palace where the high priests resides
Cathedral – a place of worship
Casbah – a fortress within a city
Castle – a walled or fortified building
Chapel – a small religious structure for worship
Church – a large religious structure for public worship
Citadel – a fortress within a city
Convent – a place for female clerics
Dogoba – a place where religious items are kept
Dewel – a place for rest, religious in nature
Donjon – the inner tower of a fortress
Fane – a small temple area for individual worship usually
Fort – a small fortified place
Fortress – a large permanently occupied and walled area enclosing a city
Friary – a place where clerics are trained and instructed
Hold – an area fortified for temporary safety
Hostel – part of a religious structure where travelers are maintained
Joss house – a small place of worship for clerics usually
Keep – the strongest and most secure part of a fortress
Manor – a house of a lord or lady
Manse – a place or residence housing ecclesiastics
Monastery – a place for religious peoples to retire or move away from the outside influences of the world
Nunnery – a place for training female clerics
Oratorian – a place where clerics live together
Outpost – a rough fort often temporally occupied
Pagoda – a grand shrine or temple of many levels
Parthenon – many deities are worshipped within this space
Parsonage – the area associated with a religious structure
Priory – a place for clerics and others to teach or preach to the populace at large
Pyramid – a religious structure often containing a burial
Rectory – an area given over to a church for life
Refuge – usually a small secluded place of refuge
Sacellum – a small unroofed religious space
Safehold – a place that is usually safe from attack, secluded and kept secret
Sanctum – a religious place free of intrusion
Stronghold – a place of refuge during an attack
Stupa – a place where relics are housed
Temple – a place of worship
Tope – a small shrine

MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION

Constructing a simple house is a fairly easy task, and local communities excel at such construction because the expertise is there. Woodsmen are able to extract trees from a forest, limb and notch them, and use them to construct simple houses. They generally have the tools as these are relatively simple, and they also have the manpower, as one person can do the job. However, when one tries to build larger houses with stone, or even worse with marble, decorate them with arches, facades, window ledges, and similar architectural feats, then specialists must be on hand in order to complete and perfect the job. The specialists available for the job depend upon the location.

For example, if one were to build a small sod house with a thatched roof in a small town of roughly 500 people, one would probably be able to find all the skills and materials locally - within that town. But, assuming the town has no readily available quarry and therefore no stone masons, then in order to build a stone house the house builder would need to bring in a specialist and import the material, the stone, as well as supply the necessary tools. The construction process can be expensive and time consuming.

In general, the Castle Keeper is going to have to determine the local conditions for available expertise and material. Availability depends upon the environment and local needs. In an area where the inhabitants regularly construct castles, the material and skills necessary are probably available. On the other hand, should someone decide to build a stone tower in the savannah where the nearest thorp is 100 miles away, the expertise and materials all have to be imported. In short, the CK must determine what would and would not be available for construction. In general, the larger and more complex structures incur a greater cost, more time, more importation of goods, and require more experts.

The following sections provide the CK and player with information about construction material so you can better determine the cost and time of construction.

Materials

Adobe: Adobe is brick manufactured from clay and dried by the sun. Local expertise is usually available for manufacture and construction of small buildings of one story. Larger buildings and elaborate structures require engineering expertise and more refined bricks.

Brick: Bricks consist of clay or mud and are sun dried or dried in a kiln. This material comes in many degrees of manufacture, from locally made mud bricks to more complex limestone, and grit bricks. Local manufacture of mud brick is possible and requires little expertise. For use of large or refined brick and the use of brick in complex structures, the builder must employ an expert stonemason to ensure the brick is of the proper quality and able to take the stress it must endure. Local manufacture usually only supports one story buildings of simple make.

Cloth and Pole: This construction material and its use are common amongst nomadic groups. With available materials, locals can construct any small tent, yurt, or similar structure. More elaborate tents, with canvas for instance, require the builder to purchase the materials in larger communities. Their construction ranges from the very simple to the very complex. Creating large structures with rooms, may require an expert.

Rammed Earth: This is a rare though durable method to build dwellings. Rammed earth serves as a framework for the dwelling. Once wetted, the builders compact the earth by ramming it. Once dry the rammed earth is very stout and durable. Timber frames cover the dwelling, but these the builder covers with more rammed earth and allows it to dry. These structures last for centuries. They do not support large multistory complexes unless framed in a solid and more durable material such as limestone and other rocks. Only those with experience in their construction can build rammed earth dwellings.

Grass and Thatch: Made from long grasses, these structures are simple and usually last a season or two depending upon the expertise of the builder, local weather conditions, etc. The materials and expertise for structures made of this type are usually locally available.

Plaster board and Timber: This is not a highly complex method of construction but requires some expertise if it is to be done correctly. The builder creates the plaster from mud or clays and smears it over the wood walls. Materials are often locally available but experts may have to be brought in to ensure a high quality construction.

Sod: Sod is a locally available material and easily worked. Use of this does not require much expertise, though experience helps with long-term durability issues.

Stone: Stone of almost any sort requires experts to work with and oversee construction processes to ensure its proper use. This includes building even small structures. Grand structures certainly require experts to make.

Timber: These structures include anything from simple and inexpert log cabin construction to highly detailed framed slat-board houses. Generally, the more complex the structure, the greater the chance the builder will require experts to ensure the job is being done properly.

Wattle and Daub: This method involves the use of woven material overlain and interwoven with daub (mud and manure). The greater the expertise, the longer lasting this structure will be and the more durable.

Cost of construction

The following is a general outline of construction cost by square foot for buildings. The low range involves use of cheap materials with the high range involving use of expensive materials. After the base cost has been determined consult **Tables 6.10a** and **6.10b** in order to determine the cost of design complexity and location on the overall cost. Further consult the need for labor costs with **Table 6.10c**. The result total is the cost of the construction.

Use **Table 6.10 Unit Cost of Construction** in order to determine the cost of building a dwelling. These base costs must be determined. These include the material, and tools needed. If the character is able to do all the labor and gather the material themselves, then cost should not be a factor. Determine the cost using **Table 6.10**, based upon the distance the material needs to be imported. Use the first column if the material is available locally. Otherwise, determine how far away the material is in miles and use the appropriate column.

Note: The square footage must include the width of castle or tower walls.

TABLE 6.10 BASE UNIT COST OF CONSTRUCTION IN GOLD

Construct	At Hand	1-100 miles	101+miles
Basement	5	10	20
Ground floor	20	100	200
Upper floor	10	50	100
Attic	10	25	50
Roof	10	50	100

Design complexity

As noted above, there are several degrees of design complexity, from simple houses to complex castles. Determine the complexity of the design and adjust the numbers from **Table 6.10 Unit Cost of Construction** accordingly. For fortifications, manor houses, churches, or similar buildings, the design type may change per wing or addition. Any common fortification can be dealt with as a difficult design; however, more complex additions may be extraordinary in nature. The CK must determine the design complexity but common sense should prevail.

TABLE 6.10A DESIGN COMPLEXITY COST

Complexity	Cost Increase
Simple	x1
Hard	x2
Difficult	x4
Extraordinary	x5 – x10 or even more

Simple: These designs are usually square or rectangular one-story houses.

Hard: These designs are usually multi-floored affairs that involve the use of complex design features such as spiral staircases.

Difficult: All fortifications are at least difficult in nature to build because they require certain degrees of expertise to ensure durability and the capacity to withstand extraordinary pressure in battle. They also include mansions, temples, churches, or any large building with multiple wings and great load bearing responsibilities.

Extraordinary: Extraordinary buildings range in style and design and the cost is unlimited. They include structures such as the great cathedrals of Europe and the fortress cities of the Middle East, to the pyramids of Egypt. Large fortifications are included in this. The cost can be extraordinary and even bankrupt an entire kingdom. Consider all large or elaborate building extraordinary.

Location

The location of the structure can also affect the cost. In areas that are easy to build and require little movement of land and rock to construct, the cost can stay low. However, once building begins in difficult areas such as in riverbeds, along rocky precipices, atop buttes, etc., the costs go up fairly quickly as the builders must transform the land to meet construction needs.

Normal: Building in these areas is common or easy and requires little if any landform alteration to allow the building processes.

Hard: Building on these landforms is not common. However, it occurs often enough that the experts required to manage the affairs are readily available. These include remote area hilltops, near water ways, etc.

Difficult: The construction location is difficult to reach and may require some effort in land fixing to manage the construction process but are not unusual. Hillside fortresses, in swampy areas, sea coast and other landforms of this nature are difficult to build on but easily accessible.

Extraordinary: The structure's construction occurs on a particularly unusual land feature such as atop as cliff, on top of a tall mountain, in the sea bed, on an island in the lake, etc. These areas are difficult to reach and work around, requiring massive effort and extensive engineering knowledge to manage.

TABLE 6.10B LOCATION COST OF CONSTRUCTION

Complexity	Cost Increase
Simple	x1
Hard	x2
Difficult	x4
Extraordinary	x5-x10 or even more

Tradesmen

Most work on structures requires a nominal amount of expertise. Even simple structures require some degree of knowledge for proper building. In many instances, the skills and expertise are local. But in all instances of hard and above, tradesmen who have an expertise with the material and designs are necessary to ensure proper construction.

Simple: These structures require a person of at least foreman expertise to build properly per 1,000 square feet constructed.

Hard: Structure requires a master to build. He in turn requires at least one foreman per 2,000 square feet constructed

Difficult: Structures require an engineer to build and design. He in turn requires one foreman per 4,000 square feet and 1 expert craftsman (woodworker, stonemason etc) per 2,000 sq. feet constructed.

Extraordinary: Building requires an architect to build. He requires one engineer per 5,000 sq. feet constructed, and as difficult above.

The number of workers used in a project is variable. However, each foreman should have at least 3-12 people working under him. The larger projects may require greater numbers of workers, greater than the ratio above. So in an extraordinary project like the Great Wall of China, the. workers may outnumber the foremen 100 to 1; the CK should adjust as needed or the player desires.

A difficult 10,000 square foot building would require an architect, 2 engineers, and five foreman to construct. A 100 square foot cabin would require one foreman or person of equivalent knowledge to build properly.

TABLE 6.10C TRADESMEN

Complexity	Cost Increase
Architect	50gp per month
Engineer	25gp per month
Foreman	3gp per month
Craftsmen	3gp per month
Worker	1gp a month

Food and Shelter

Generally, the cost of construction includes an importation modifier; 1gp is considered enough to purchase food for one person for one week. This is subsistence level.

Construction Time

This can vary greatly depending upon location, expertise and manpower (as well as other mitigating factors such as weather, seasons, warfare, etc.). In general, one can assume one person can build 10sq. feet in one day. Obviously, the more people one uses in the construction method, the quicker it goes. However, the more complex the structure the more time consuming.

TABLE 6.10D TRADESMEN

Complexity	Time Increase
Simple	x1
Hard	x2
Difficult	x4
Extraordinary	x5-x10 or even more

Hiring thousands of workers has attendant problems as well, as each worker rrequires food, shelter, and provisions supplied for or at least made available for purchase. This means, in the case of some structures, building temporary cities to support the construction if necessary. These can be located next to the structure, which is how many walled towns came into existence, or even several miles away in the case of a manse or mansion. Building closer to a city or large town offers benefits such that the problem of labor and supplying them is mitigated. The typical town can not support more than 10% of its adult population as workers though so limitations arise there as well.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Criminal activity occurs in every society and it is unlikely, though conceivable, that any fantasy setting would be without its criminals and ne'er-do-wells. Punishments for crimes vary greatly from place to place and time to time. As well, the process of capturing and trying criminals differs dramatically from culture to culture and state to state. **Table 6.11 Crime and Punishment**, based loosely on a Medieval European model, serves as a solid basis for any fantasy setting.

There are generally three types of crimes: misdemeanors, felonies, and high crimes.

Misdemeanors: Misdemeanors, or low crimes, for the most part consist of petty acts of social disturbance such as drunkenness, brawling, petty theft, or even the selling of shoddy goods. Fines, public humiliation, and perhaps some time in the jail usually serve as punishment for these crimes. Though, in some cases, the punishments could be far worse (for example, even petty theft may garner amputation). Punishments and prosecution for these crimes are often handled at a very local level and rarely, though not unknown, make it to a noble's court. The sheriff or other notable vested with authority can judge and pass punishment upon the offender.

Felonies: Felonious criminal activity involves major acts of thievery, robbery, rioting, extortion, etc. These crimes are often viewed as acts counter to or destructive of the state, its representatives, the vested classes, systems or likewise. Punishments are often harsh and even deadly. Furthermore,

punishment for criminal activity in this vein is often greater when the victim is of the noble or vested classes. Local courts try these crimes. Local sheriffs, the military, or others given such power round up the usual suspects and jail them. The courts generally consist of a noble or nobles, oligarchs, merchants, and perhaps representatives of the religious authorities. Punishments are meted out by law, but these punishments are almost always at the whim of the those judging the case.

High crimes: These are crimes that involve grave bodily harm or murder, treason, bribery of officials, highway robbery, piracy, or any other activity considered destructive of or to the state's authority and power. The punishments for these crimes vary greatly but are always harsh, ranging from massive fines and forfeiture of privilege to execution. High courts, nobles and even the king try these crimes. The courts tend to favor those bringing the charges and are far from fair.

Note that criminal activity against the noble or ruling classes often carries greater punishments than similar crimes perpetrated against one of the lower classes. Also, crimes committed by those of the upper class often carry less severe punishments than a similar crime enacted by one of the lower classes. The latter, however, is not the case should the crime occur against a noble or nobles. For example, a peasant assaulting a noble may result in the whipping of the peasant, a fine, jail time, the peasant placed in the pillory, or otherwise punished. A noble assaulting a peasant may result in little more than censure by a local authority. Consider punishments for crimes within the context of an unequal society with those in the upper tiers having more rights and protections than those in the lower

tiers. On the other hand, some crimes nobles commit are more harshly punished than those committed by the peasants, as a noble committing acts against the state are far more dangerous to the state than those committed by peasants (though specifics of couse, may vary).

The tables assume the acts are illegal.

In all cases, a repeat offense ups the ante on the punishments, usually doubling the fines and jail time with more harsh punishments following suit.

TABLE 6.11A CRIMINAL MISDEMEANORS

Crime	Social Standing: Low	Social Standing: High
Assault	1 week in jail or 1gp	1gp
Disturbing the peace	1 week or 1gp	1gp
Drunkenness	1 day and 1sp	1gp
Lewdness	1-4 weeks or 4gp or public humiliation	5gp
Prostitution	1-4 weeks, 4gp, or public humiliation	public humiliation and forfeiture of privilege
Solicitation	public humiliation	generally none
Petty theft	restitution and 6 months in jail	restitution and public rebuke if applicable
Shoddy goods	10gp fine, public humiliation and 1 month in jail	10gp fine and public rebuke
Trespass	1gp fine and 1-7 days jail	1gp fine
Gambling	1gp fine, public humiliation	public rebuke, though generally none
Breaking and entering	10gp fine, 6 months jail	10gp fine, public humiliation if warranted
Adulterated goods	As shoddy goods	
Coercion	15gp fine, 6 months to a year in jail	15gp fine, 1 month in jail

TABLE 6.11B CRIMINAL FELONIES

Crime	Social Standing: Low	Social Standing: High
Riot	6 months and 10gp fine	100gp fine loss of rank and 1-2 years jail
Inciting to riot, Arson	3 months and 10gp	50gp and 6 months jail
Destruction of property	5-10 years jail or servitude	Restitution and public humiliation
Thievery	1-5 years	1 year jail and loss of rank
Tax cheat	1 year and forfeiture of property	restitution and 10%-20% fine
Swindling	1-6 years	restitution and 1 year or 20% fine
Sale of stolen property	3-10 years	loss of rank and property
Coin shaving	5-10 year	1 year loss of rank
Harboring criminal	1-10 years	Fine equal to 20% property or 1-10 years jail
Highway robbery	5-20 years, servitude or execution	same with loss of rank and property
Piracy	same as highway robbery	same as highway robbery

TABLE 6.11C HIGH CRIMES

Crime	Social Standing: Low	Social Standing: High
Murder	execution or life of servitude	100gp fine, loss of rank, and 1-100 years jail
Treason, Heresy	execution	execution or loss of all rank and property and 10-20 jail
Rape	5-20 years	50gp fine, loss of rank or public humiliation
Bribery	1-10 years	fine, loss of rank and 6 months to 1 year in prison
Counterfeiting	10-20 years	5-10 years, loss of rank

CHAPTER 7 – DUNGEONS

Dungeons and caverns are nexus points for many adventures. Into the deeps, under the earth and far from the light of day, many an adventurer travels to gain their glory, defeat evil, gather treasures and, well, to adventure. Players spend most games and much game time adventuring in this underworld. Yet, it seems CKs pay far less attention to creating an underworld which has the same logic or order to it than has been given to that of the world above ground. For instance, one might encounter a manticore deep underground in a small room guarding a pile of treasure. Exactly how is that manticore feeding itself year after year after year underneath the cold pale earth? Might its muscles atrophy? And where did that treasure come from? Although not initially important, the backdrop for this encounter becomes one of technical gaming challenges and rewards rather than reaching its potential as an encounter vibrant with life. If designed properly, players explore such encounters with zeal, and whole vistas of gaming fun unfold at the table.

This section of the **Castle Keepers Guide** offers a brief overview of natural caverns and dungeons, how they form or are built, their make-up and real world ecology and some fantasy ecology ideas. Additionally, we offer advice on how one might go about creating an underworld ecology by which its denizens could actually feed themselves and even survive underneath the earth. Beyond that is the dungeon itself, its walls, thickness, traps, and other ins and outs of the underworld environment.

THE UNDERGROUND

Conditions underneath the earth are fairly harsh, at least to those creatures that live above ground. It is absolutely dark beneath the earth. No sunlight to illuminate one's movements, no sunlight to allow the growth of normal plants, and, long term stays underneath the earth without exposure to the sun can have devastating effects on those who spend the majority of their life above ground. It is generally quite humid underground, approaching 80%-90% with moisture clinging to almost every surface. Although the temperature will vary, caves are generally cool environments with temperatures ranging between 50 and 60°F (10 and 16°C). Additionally, caves form naturally and over great expanses of time and have a logic all their own. Caves and caverns can be small or super massive and often have circuitous formations with no seeming logic to them. They are difficult to traverse with debris and obstacles cluttering nearly every passage and cranny. There is much variation in caves. Following the guidelines below, one should be able to come up with a reasonable facsimile of a natural cavern.

LIGHT

There is no light underground. The sun does not penetrate into the earth. Normal plants do not grow in these environments. With little to no plant life, very few animals can live in caves. Those few that do are sparse and often small. With no need of

their eyes, those animals which do live underground are often blind and depend upon hearing, smell or feel to navigate and find food. It is absolutely dark and the darkness affects the life of everything.

There are exceptions. Luminescent plants and minerals that can be found in caves and do offer some degree of light when located. These are rare occurrences though, very localized and the light offered does not allow for photosynthesis and only offers minimal vision. Lava (should one be able to get close enough to it) emits light and ice caverns can illuminate to significant depths. With the previous exceptions, all light must be imported.

This makes seeing underground a difficult task. In the underground, there are no ambient light sources, unless placed there by the CK, and it is dark. A character's eyes do not ever adjust to the "light", it is simply dark; without a light source the underground is impenetrable blackness. Traveling underground without a light is extremely hazardous. All spot checks are automatic fails. Travelers run into walls, doors, and overhangs. They trip over ledges, rocks and turns in the path, and they fall not knowing how to break their fall.

Traveling in the dark without a light source or darkvision requires a dexterity check every 10 feet of movement, CL 15; failure results in 1d4 points of damage.

Using light sources is the only way to travel in the underground. Light sources mingle with shadows and geological forms to create a constantly moving, almost vibrant landscape. Shapes materialize and fade with movement; what looms one moment fades into little more than a small ledge the next. Light plays tricks on the viewer, so much so that peripheral vision is greatly reduced. Those that live underground, such as dwarves, gnomes, goblins, and the like have long accustomed their other senses to make up for failings in sight. They use their nose to smell and their feet to unravel the contours of the cavern, but more importantly they use their hearing, listening for the echoes of their movements, the reflection of what light they have, and other small nuances to unravel the underground.

As a result, all spot checks underground, unless the spotter has deepvision, are made at a CL 2. This does not affect any natural underground traveler. All dexterity checks suffer a similar CL 2 penalty.

Light offers an immediate, visible area around the light source. But, except for magical light, the light does not suddenly end, rather it fades into the distance, creating a host of shadows that mingle with the light itself. This light allows for partial visibility, as reflected in the Actual Distance column in **Table 7.1 Light Underground.** In these shadows all spot checks are made at a CL 6, and hide checks benefit from a +6 to the check.

TABLE 7.1 LIGHT UNDERGROUND

Light Source	Viewable Distance	Actual Distance
Lichen	1-5 feet	2-8 feet
Lave Source	500 feet	1000 feet
Ice Caverns*	100 feet	200 feet
Burning Hands	10 feet	20 feet
Candle	5 feet	15 feet
Lantern	30-60 feet	60-120 feet
Torch	40 feet	60 feet
Magical Dagger	10 feet	10 feet
Magical Weapon	20 feet	20 feet
Magical Sword	20 feet	20 feet

* This assumes that it is daylight or there is another source of light behind the ice. During the night, the ice caverns act as any other light source.

Temperature

The temperature of a cave remains fairly constant throughout the year. The temperature roughly equates to the mean annual surface temperature of the region where the cave lies. Hence, caves in northern latitudes or high altitudes tend to be much cooler than caves found in equatorial regions and low altitudes. In temperate regions, the temperature ranges between 50 and 60°F (10 and 16°C). The farther one descends into a cave the warmer the cave becomes, as the cave is affected more by geothermal activity. One can roughly say for each 500 feet of descent there is a temperature increase of 1°F (0.5°C). Proximity to the ocean, waterways, lava flows or volcanoes greatly affect the temperature of caverns as well.

Humidity

Caves are almost always extremely humid. Even in very dry climates, once one has descended within a few hundred yards or meters of the entry, a cavern's humidity level tends to stabilize. The variation can be from 60% in dry climes to 100% in moist climes. The airflow in and out of the cavern affects humidity levels. These airflows generally lower the humidity. Proximity to underground waterways or aquifers will usually increase the humidity. Proximity to lava or volcanoes will either increase or decrease the humidity, depending upon the circumstances.

Movement

In the event of natural caverns, few floors are flat and even, and these many twists, turns, up and downs affect movement through the terrain. The following table addresses this effect on movement rate as it concerns normal bipedal creatures. It does not effect quadrupeds, or creatures with multiple limbs (such as spiders), flying creatures, or oozes which have no legs. It likewise has no effect on elementals or non-corporeal undead.

TABLE 7.2 UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT RATE

Surface	Movement Rate
Sandy	-5 ft.
Slime*	-10 ft.
Wet*	-5 ft.
Ice*	-10 ft.
Jagged	-10 ft.
Warped/Uneven	-10 ft.

*Traveling over wet, slimy, or icy ground forces a dexterity check for every 30 ft. moved. The CL is dependent on the situation (such as moving quickly, combat,) or other modifiers which the Castle Keeper determines require such a check.

CAVES

Caves are circuitous, massive, twisting affairs that follow the logic of the earth. There are several types of caves, each with their own distinctive formation patterns and developmental histories, making them unique and easily recognizable. Although each type of cavern listed below has many subtypes and unique features depending upon locality, acidity of the soil, chemical make-up of the rock and the water which dissolves them, the broad categories should suffice to create cavern systems that are logical and easy to recognize.

Waterways

Many caves form or are widened by the flow of water through them.Some underground rivers are extremely large while others are very small. Underground lakes also can be found filling a cavern. Water exists almost everywhere under the earth. These waterways deform the caves much as rivers deform the surface world, creating crevices, trenches, or watercourses. This water accounts for the constant humidity in caves, the clay, damp air, and it also helps regulate the temperature.

Solution Caves

These are the most common caves and the most commonly thought of when one imagines a cave. They are formed in rock which is soluble by the chemicals in the rainwater or river water which percolates into the ground. The process of the water and chemical erosion of the rock underground creates vast and sprawling caverns stretching for miles in many directions.

Commonly, these caves form in limestone and dolomites and even salt deposits. The erosion zones follow natural faults in the rock and expand over time becoming very large, reaching hundreds of yards or meters across. The passages connecting rooms and chambers can be both small and large, rise and fall suddenly or even slope gently over long distances. These are fairly random in appearance creating an almost sponge-like formation of chambers and passages. Generally, these caves initially form below the water table. As the water table drops, the chambers and passages open up which results in a secondary stage of development where dripstone features such as stalactites and flowstone occur.

The lower portions of these caves are often beneath the water table and immersed in water. Like the upper portion, they have a sponge-like pattern but generally lack the dripstone features. Water flows fairly constantly in the lower zones and can be quite powerful. There is a zone where the water table rises and falls periodically which can immerse dripstone features or uncover portions of the cave without dripstone features.

Lava Caves

Lava caves are almost exclusively caves formed by lava. When magma flows through the earth or even above ground it both strips away rock and melts it, leaving tubes and hardened shells or casing where the lava once flowed. The caves are typically tube and funnel shaped caverns stretching in a branch-like fashion sometimes several miles in length. Once magma retreats from areas it can leave large open chambers or numerous open chambers connected by lava tubes and funnels. These caves tend to have few erosion features initially and the rock generally does not support the formation of extensive flowstone features. In general, these caves have a nearly dendritic pattern (much like rivers) near the surface with long tubes and tunnels beneath the surface connecting large empty magma chambers. Rift caverns also form in volcanic regions. These caverns are typified by long and deep splits in volcanic material caused during cooling.

These caves can be located near active volcanic regions. In this case, the area of the caves is under constant flux, have a much higher temperature and are far more deadly an environment (earthquakes would be prevalent in these areas). In inactive volcanic regions, the cave complexes would be more stable and have a more constant humidity and temperature but would be subject to collapses and cave-ins. In both cases, the rock formation in these areas can be quite deadly as they form sharp angles and ridges making movement over them very difficult.

Coastal Caves or Sea Caves

These caves lie along most coastlines with rocky bluffs or cliffs which extend to the ocean's edge. Generally, the action of the ocean's waves and tides effect erosion of the cliff faces in fault lines. The rock wears away and deep caverns form in the cliffs. The caves can extend several hundred yards or more into the cliff faces but are rarely much deeper. These caves form in almost any type of rock.

These caves are usually narrow and tall though they can be fairly broad. Typically they have a series of a few connected chambers or one large chamber that varies in size and width along its length. High tide tends to inundate them with water and low tide leaves them empty. Some sea caves lie a little inland or above the sea level should the sea level have changed. The caves which are active and located by the ocean can be dangerous in high tide as the power of ocean waves increases in the narrow confines.

Erosional Caves

These caves form by water flowing over, around, and eventually through rock. The water carries heavy sediments with it that help to grind out these caverns. They can be found in any type of rock with the most spectacular being located in granite. They occasionally intersect with solution caves deep underground. These caves can be extensive with large columns, deep channels, potholes, and flutes. The patterns of the caves follow the fractures or faults in the rock and therefore can be fairly chaotic.

Erosional caves and canyons can be exceedingly dangerous areas to explore. Because they can extend for many miles with their water source being dozens of miles away, the risk of flash flooding is really high. Water flows very fast through these narrow passages and carries a lot of force. The rock face in the caves is often very smooth though, making movement easier.

Crevice Caves

These caves form in many types of rocks and they are typified by interconnected rectilinear crevices or slits in rock. These caves are likely as common as solution caves just much less explored as they are singularly difficult to navigate, map, and lack the 'fascinating' features and natural beauty of other types of caves. They form by tectonic upheaval, whereby rocks fracture or split and are thrust apart leaving small spaces between them. Erosion of mineral veins with rocks, slope movement, or even frost heaves cause large rocks to split from one another.

These caves appear as a series of interconnected narrow crevices. The crevices may vary from the very deep and narrow to the shallow and wide. Most crevices are not very wide, but an occasional example does exceed a few feet in width. Crevice caves can be extensive and are often located in areas where other unconnected crevice caves exist.

Talus Caves

These caves form by large accumulations of boulders piled atop one another. Glacial retreat creates many of these caves as the boulders the glaciers carried with them tend to drop off in massive talus piles. Theses caves also lie at the base of cliffs in active or extinct earthquake zones. There is very little patterning to these caves as they resemble a large pile of massive rocks.

Many talus caves are small and may even consist of nothing more than a space between a few large boulders. However, they can be very extensive consisting of thousands of yards of interconnected spaces, because they lie in nearly every clime with steep rocky faces.

Glacial Caves

These caves form in glaciers, typically where the glacier meets the earth and the water of the glacier melts. These melt-water tunnels are long, resemble erosional caves, and can be quite extensive. Another type of cave found in glaciers resemble crevice caves where large blocks of ice have cracked and split apart leaving gaping crevices between them.

Glacial caves are quite active caves and are constantly shifting from season to season as the glacier moves, weather changes, and snowfall accumulates and melts. Because they are made of ice and snow, travel in glacial caves can be exceedingly hazardous.

TERMINOLOGY

Cave: Underground cavity formed by erosion or tectonic forces.

Cave Popcorn: Small popcorn like features found on cave walls. They are almost exclusively found in solution caves.

Cavern: A large cavity found in a cave.

Chamber: Largest of cavities found in caves, perhaps 100 or more yards in any direction.

Columns: Stalactites joining with stalagmites to form a single column. These are typically found in well formed solution caves.

Dark Zone: Area of a cave that never gets light.

Drapery: Mineral deposit formed by calcite that looks like thin sheets hanging in folds. They are typically found in solution caves.

Dripstone: Puddles of mineral deposits formed where water drips from the ceiling to floor and leaves a mineral in place. They are typically found in solution caves.

Flowstone: Deposit of calcium formed by slow moving water which deposits mineral in a manner such that it looks like frosting or icicles.

Fissure: An opening or crack in a rock.

Grotto: Refers to a chamber or cavern that has many unusual or rare features in it making them quite beautiful. Helictites have knotted or twisted shapes due to slowly seeping water that causes a thin film of calcium carbonate to stick to the side of a cave formation in a random manner.

Passages: Cavities in caves that are longer than they are wide or high and they may join larger cavities.

Pits: Vertical holes found in the floor of a cave. They can be quite deep and follow fractures or imperfections in the rock.

Rimstone Dams: Terraces or steps found along underground streams and on floors that contain water.

Rooms: Wide areas in passages but not quite chambers.

Sinkholes: Round and "bowl-shaped" holes created when a cave collapses.

Soda Straws: Hollow stalactites that look like straws.

Stalactite: Cave formation refers to many types of features that hang from the ceiling of a cave. They are typically columnar with a pointed end.

Stalagmite: A formation that develops from the ground up. They can be of many shapes.

DUNGEONS

Dungeons are underground complexes constructed by some creature. They serve a variety of purposes from defensive installations to storage rooms. They sometimes join or have been built into natural caverns. Dungeons followed patterns often similar to other residences, with rooms for a variety of purposes. Some dungeons stand abandoned, while others play an active roll in the life of a town, castle, or other populated region.

Defensive: Defensive dungeons are built primarily as defensive strongholds. They have few entries, thicker walls, barracks areas, redundant defensive features, many gates or doors and obstacles for movement, and narrow spaces which create fire zones and defensive positions, such as bridges and long hallways.

Residential: Residential dungeons are built primarily as residences for denizens underground. They could have many entries, many chambers and larger chambers, cooking rooms, storerooms, etc. They are generally more open.

Storerooms: Storeroom dungeons are built for storage and the safekeeping of material or treasures. They could be of various types, but generally would have large access points with some defensive posts or some manner of closing off an area. Well-organized and generally simple in scope, if large in size. They possess many passages and normally can accommodate carts or wagons and have many large rooms placed near one another.

Temple: Temple complexes are devoted to a deity or pantheon. They can be of any shape and size but are often complex with many secret passages and hidden rooms.

Common Room Types

Alcove	Latrine
Armory	Library
Barracks	Menagerie
Cell	Sleeping Quarters
Entry	Store Room
Feast Hall	Temple
Foyer	Throne Room
Guard Room	Torture Chamber
Kitchen	Treasury
Laboratory	Well Room

TERMINOLOGY

Door: Doors are generally made of wood, though stone is also possible.They are bound and able to close off a hallway or room.

Doorway: An opening in a hall or into a room that does not possess a door. The roof may be supported by an arch.

Column: A beam of stone, marble, wood or other material supporting a ceiling.

Loophole: A small hole that allows a viewer to see from one room to the next, often disguised.

Flagstone: Refers to a stone floor set in the earth or some type of concrete.

Hallway: A long way connecting two sections of a dungeon.

Hatch: A door in the floor or ceiling that leads to rooms above or below.

Ledge: A walkway overlooking a deeper section of the dungeon.

Level: Each dungeon floor is referred to as a level.

Murder-hole: A hole in the ceiling which allows access to the room below. Defenders use murder-holes to poor burning oil, boiling water, or other materials on attackers.

Ramp: A sloped section of a hallway that usually leads to a level above or below.

Sconce: A notch or abutment used to hold a torch.

Secret Door: A hidden door, hatch, or trapdoor that leads to another portion of the dungeon.

Stairs: Similar to a ramp, as they lead to another level of the dungeon. They come in many types, with straight, curved, or spiral staircases being the most common.

Trap: A section of the dungeon designed to kill or maim interlopers.

Trap, Cage: A trap where the characters fall into the cage, or the cage falls upon them.

Trap, Gas: A trap that releases poison gas into the area.

Trap, Magic: A trap that sets off a magical spell.

Trap, Pit: A trap where the victims fall into a pit.

Trapdoor: A door that leads to another section of the dungeon, up or down.

Doors and Walls

Probably the least dangerous and most common challenge to player characters are simple obstacles such as locked doors, or walls of earth, metal, or stone. Growing up with a video game mentality where the edges of the earth are closed off from exploration, walls can have a significant psychological impact on gamers. Here one assumes that the wall is impenetrable, and the door, which cannot be opened with magic or muscle, is in fact impassable.

This does not need to be the case however, unless - for adventure or campaign purposes - the Castle Keeper needs it to be so. Instead, one should think of walls, doors, grates, and other obstacles as challenges found in an organic free form environment where the characters always have a chance to overcome, reroute, or otherwise use their creativity to explore this shared world with one another.

Many of these obstacles may be broken down, mined away, or tunneled around, given the proper amount of time.

Walls

Walls come in a variety of shapes and sizes and made from different materials. Wall hit points are measured by the number of feet of thickness per 10-foot section of wall.Walls and doors have an armor class value which reflects the hardness of the material and the difficulty damaging it. Stone has an AC of 16, while wood has an AC of 14.

These figures serve as a "necessity of haste". In other words, carving out a hole in a wall or breaking down a door in this matter should be used only when time is of the essence, or to determine how many HP a given structure has in the event an evil priest casts an earthquake spell on the party while they are underground.

In instances where there is no immediate threat of attack, constant die rolling is mind numbingly boring. In these situations, merely use the "time" scale listed next to the hit points on on **Table 7.3: Wall Hit Points** to see how long it would take to smash through an area of wall or break down a door. The time calculation is based on an average amount of damage vs. a hit every round by one character with no threat of missing due to outside stresses. An example of these outside stresses would include enemy attacks.

Multiple characters under no duress cut the time by half for each additional character. A maximum of four medium-sized characters per ten feet of wall may attempt to bring down a wall. A maximum of two medium-sized characters may attempt to bring down a door.

TABLE 7.3 WALL HIT POINTS

Material	Hit Points Per ft. Thickness	Time
Masonry	100 per ft.	17 rounds
Reinforced Masonry	200 per ft.	34 rounds
Hewn Stone	1000 per ft.	167 rounds
Iron	100 per inch	17 rounds per inch
Wood/ Door	50 per ft.; 5 per inch	1 round per inch
Reinforced Wood/ Door	75 per ft.; 7 per inch	2 rounds per inch

UNDERWORLD ECOLOGY

The ecology of caves and underground environments is fairly simple. The lack of light disallows the growth of plant life and without that, there is little to support any animal life. It is a barren and dark world. Those few animals that live underground, such as bats, usually forage outside. Other animals, such as bears or wolves, hole up near entries in order to be able to get outside quickly to eat. There are small fish, fungi, and small organisms living underground, but little to hold an adventurer's interests. Yet, the adventures of our heroes take place in a fantasy environment. And in a fantasy environment, anything is possible. The outline outline presents avenues for developing an underground ecology which can support a wide variety of creatures living underground.

CAVE ECOLOGY

The first is that there are species like the salamander that live entirely in caves, species like bats that live partially in caves, and then there are the accidental inhabitants like bears and wolves. There are also three basic zones: the entry zone, the transition zone, and the dark zone.

Entry Zone

The entry zone is that area where the cave meets the world above. This area can have normal plants growing about it and some can even flourish in the humid and warm airs coming from the entry. Animals are attracted to this zone for shelter and warmth in winter and cool air in summer. Bears, wolves, rats, mice, raccoons and other animals inhabit this zone, but the zone is, for the most part, empty.

Transition Zone

The transition zone is that area where the cave goes from light to darkness. Only a few ferns, grasses, fungi, molds and other similar vegetation grow in this zone. There are also a plethora of crickets, spiders, salamanders, worms, bats and similar small creatures which inhabit these zones. These are ecosystems unto themselves as the plant life and debris being washed in or out of the cave can support the basis of a food chain for larger creatures, such as crickets and bats. Occasionally, wild creatures such as wolves, badgers, bears and other similar animals use this zone for habitation.

Dark Zone

The dark zone is that area of the cave which receives no sunlight at all. The bottom of the food chain in this zone comes from the detritus of material flowing into the lower portion of the cave such as dirt and other decayed or decaying debris. Bats and similar animals may also bring in large amounts of material which fungi, molds, and bacteria use as food. The bacteria, fungi, and molds supply worms, salamanders, and similar animals with nourishment. These in turn supply spiders, insects, and larger salamanders with food. In general, the bat is the top of the food chain here, though it acquires the vast majority of its sustenance from outside. There are also crayfish and small fish found in the waterways of caves.

In all, the creatures living down here are small and have sparse populations. There may be a wide variety, but few in number. The animals are also lacking in pigment, for the most part, and tend to be pale in color. They have little use for sight so often have vestigial eyes that are extremely sensitive to light.

The ecosystem of real underground caverns may be delicate and have a wide variety of interactions, but is nonetheless small and has little interest to explorers.

Ecology of the Underworld

Troglobites: Animals that live their entire life cycle in a cave.

Troglodytae: A human cave dweller.

Troglophiles: Animals that like living in caves but do not depend on the cave's environment as part of their survival.

Trogloxens: Animals that visit caves occasionally but live above ground.

Fantasy Underground Ecosystem

There is virtually an unlimited amount of imaginative material to draw upon when creating a fantasy underground environment. One must, when creating the environment, maintain consistency and use real world analogies to make the ecosystem logical and workable. For instance, large herds of underground herbivores would require massive amounts of nutrients. Something the scope of most caves could not create even were the whole thing covered in some grasses. However, by creating large fungi which gathers nutrients from calcium deposits, these could supply food for a great many creatures. So let us examine a few creatures and possible ecologies.

Consider the kobold. Let's assume for the sake of argument that the kobold is not a deep dwelling species but prefers to inhabit transition zones in caves. Primarily they do so because it allows access to dark places where they can hide, camp, store treasures and have shelter from the elements and predators, as well as egress to the world above, where food is plentiful. They do not, as a rule, venture deep into the earth, do not mine and care not for the dangers below.

The kobold would likely seek out particular types of caves. Those places with many entries and exits, burrows, holes and passages that are small and rarely used by other creatures would likely be the cave kobolds prefer. A talus cave fits the kobold well. They are found along cliffs and at the base of mountains or even in areas where glaciers once stood. These caves are not deep, are easy to enter and exit from innumerable points, have tight passages and a random layout. These would be perfect for the kobold.

Very little in the way of ecological development needs be examined with this example as the kobolds gain their sustenance from the outside world and only inhabit caves as a convenience. However, note that they have preferences for cave types and even, perhaps, locations or climes. With a simple twist one has created an 'ecological niche' for the kobold.

A more interesting example would be underground lizard folk. Lets assume for the sake of argument that these lizard folk virtually never leave the caverns they inhabit, except to find other caves, and live out their entire life inside a cavern complex. The first thing to consider would be the lizard folk themselves. At what level of technology would they exist? Does light play a role in their life? The latter issue is not of little concern. Should the lizard folk use light often, they must acquire the materials for burning (gas, wood, or coal). Even if they did use fire a significant amount, it should go without saying they would still spend much of their life in total darkness. As such, they would have to have a manner of moving about that did not require light. Perhaps they developed a sonar ability activated with clicks of the tongue or hissing sounds such that whenever they moved about, they telegraphed themselves by their sounds - unless of course they were at such a pitch that

no man could hear it. They would also most likely, though not necessarily, be paler in color than one finds above ground.

Furthermore, let's assume the lizard folk ate only meat: fish, crawfish, bats and the like. To support even a small band of lizard folk, a large expanse of cave would have to be available to them for hunting or their nutritional needs are greatly different than a man of similar size. To enable this, the cave would have to have flowing water to support the fish and some areas where bats might prefer to live. Even so, only a very small band could be supported this way. Should one prefer a larger band to inhabit a cave, a more complex and rich ecology would be necessary. Consider the possibility that the water flowing through the cave connects to a major river and that river pumps a good portion of its water - and the fish in it - through the cave. In this instance, the lizard folk could likely survive for many long decades in a cavern just eating the constantly replenished fish supply. It might also be possible for the lizard folk to have bred a pig-like creature which could eat bat dung, pull nutrients from detritus washed into caves (worms, salamander, and such). The pigs thereby turn inedible products (bat dung) into edible products (pig meat) and can supply a large population of lizard folk.

The lizard folk would prefer caves that could support this type of ecology so they might be attracted to solution caves. These can be very extensive and have ample supplies of water. They are often located in limestone shelves intersected by many rivers, both aboveground and below ground.

In this example, the Castle Keeper creates a reasonable facsimile of an underground ecology. The river supplies fish and nutrients to the underground world. The bats supply food for the pigs. And the fish and pigs supply food for a large population of lizard folk, all in a totally dark world of deep solution caves.

Another good example to work with, and simple, is the salamander. The salamander comes from the elemental plane of fire. One could reasonably assume this magical creature requires nothing in the way of sustenance that those of the mortal realms need. The salamander needs heat and fire or even magma to draw energy. As such, the salamander lives in or near active volcanic caverns.

Let's consider a vast solution cave with many hundreds of miles of passages and caverns and chambers. Its lower portion is underwater and heated in several places by geothermal vents. The upper portion has a river or two running through it and the ground above receives a lot of rain allowing for the percolation of nutrients into the cave.

At the bottom of the food chain imagine bacteria living around the geothermal vents. The bacteria supply food to small fish and in turn they supply food to larger and even giant, though rare, fish. Also, the chamber in the upper sections may contain enough debris to support unusual fungi and molds that grow to large, even gigantic sizes. These supply food to various larger creatures living in the deeps and those in turn supply food to others. With these basics of a food chain, one can create a living dungeon full of unusual features and interesting encounters.

Now, take that one step further. Assume that some orcs have figured out how to grow and harvest the molds and fungi to support large populations underground. And perhaps some of the mold are luminescent and supply minimal light. With these few basic elements of an ecology, the CK can create a world of wonder beneath the earth that would interest players and the adventuring avatars alike.

With the above in mind, in creating an underground ecology, only the logic of its processes need be considered. Its resemblance to reality need not be addressed, keeping in mind that there are worlds where fire magically appears in one's hand and elves frolic for eternity beneath the leaves of sentient tress. For the whole to work though, certain logic must apply. The following is offered as advice when creating an underworld ecology.

Decide upon the basic blocks of the tree of life. Where do the basic nutrients and energy come from to allow for life to exist? How much can be found in a particular area? What can it support and how much of that can it support? From there, build the tree of life. At that point, intersect the tree with the cave's inhabitants or have them be an integral part of the tree. Orcs, for example, may throw their dead and all debris into the great waters in the lower halls, thus supplying the fish with nutrients which in turn supply the orcs with nutrients.

ADVENTURES UNDERGROUND

Caves and dungeons lie at the heart of many role playing adventures. Bound in the deeps of the earth, buried deep beneath the slag of an ancient mountain, tunneled into the cavernous rock beneath granite, or into the mire filled filth of the under city, the dungeon conjures images of dark hallways where shadows flee the flickering light of torches and the hollow sound of metal shod boots carries into the darkness, as if summoning the ancient evil that settles beneath the earth. Playing dungeon adventures can be very fun but also tedious, it is a tricky job for the Castle Keeper to keep the players focused and having fun all the while presenting the dangers offered up by these twisted underground castles.

Dungeons serve as the perfect focus for the game, driving the characters on a singular purpose, whether to find a lost treasure, slay a monster, or simply clean out a dungeon of its foul and evil inhabitants. Characters enter the underdark with single minded purpose and tend to only argue about mundane subjects such as who should listen at the door, who is carrying the torch, etc.

TYPICAL ADVENTURES UNDERGROUND

There are several types of adventures that call for the characters to go underground. The CK can carefully script these or they can run them on the fly using **Engineering Dungeons**, a book that lays out a guideline for rapid dungeon creation.

Ancient Ruins: These dungeons lie in the middle of wastelands or in some long forgotten region of the world, whether civilized or not. The characters stumble upon them suddenly. Perhaps they fall through a dense patch of vegetation to discover the vine-covered doorway that leads underground; or in attempting to escape through the sewers of old Avignon, they find a hatch that leads down a dark tunnel. Whatever the case, the characters must explore a dungeon they have no information on, going blind into the dark. These adventures supply the CK with hosts of material in magical monsters, ancient treasures, and traps.

Treasury: These dungeons, designed to protect some type of treasure, whether magical or mundane, pit the characters against a dungeon designed for the sole purpose of keeping them out. Chances are they have learned about this dungeon and are able to glean at least a little information before they enter the fray. A map leading to the dungeon is usually in order with some information scribbled on it.

Lair: These adventures tend to be dungeons that some creature has dug out of a cave or where a beast has taken over some other dungeon to make its home. The characters, usually hired or made aware of the dungeon, set off, as with the Treasury, with some modicum of information about the monster and the dungeon it inhabits.

ACTION

Running dungeons can at times seem very tedious as characters move through a monotonous motion of listening at doors, checking traps, cautiously opening the door and entering the room; all this in order to avoid being surprised or to surprise the inhabitants. The CK must learn to move through these motions quickly and not allow the game to bog down because of them. That said, the action cannot be so fast that characters become immune to the dangers of the dark underground. Usually CKs must mix the mundane with the extraordinary in order to both keep the game moving and to keep the interest levels high.

This is far easier said than done as even experienced CKs tend to become bogged down in the routine character motions, disallowing descriptive text or the role-playing subtext that allows characters to keep on their toes.

The answer is not to people the dungeon with some danger every 10 feet. Such an action tends to cause massive hit point wastage and lead characters to their deaths. Adventure time tends to be compacted in dungeon adventures, as the characters move through room by room, not passing over a great ridge or across a river where one danger in a day is the usual. Rather, multiple dangers in the space of a few hours dominate the norm. This puts tremendous pressure on the characters as hit points only heal after a day's rest and spells only return after hours of study or a day's rest. A large battle that occurs in the mid-morning is followed by one that occurs in the afternoon. Nightfall brings a third, but by such time the party is probably, wounded, completely out of spells and extra equipment.

Listening Underground

The most common action characters take while adventuring underground is to listen. They do this constantly in the dark, at doors to hear what is beyond, and in halls in hopes of discovering what lies at the far end. The listen check is a generally a wisdom check rolled on the table below; if successful, the character hears some type of sound. He may or may not know what it is, but the sound is audible. The CK must then describe the nature of the sound to the character. This need not be a perfect description of what lies beyond. Sound carries strangely in the underground world. It bounces from wall to wall, is muffled by doors and stone, and echoes in some chambers while it falls flat in others. It is extremely difficult to interpret what the sound actually is. The player need only be given the information that they have heard the sound, and what it sounded like, not necessarily what it is.

There are two basic sounds they can hear: constant and singular. If the sound is constant, recurring over and again, the characters are better able to interpret what it might be, with continued listen checks. Allow them multiple checks to do so. If the sound is singular then only one check counts. They may make more actual listen checks, in hopes of hearing it again but if it does not repeat then they know only what the CK tells them: "You do not hear anything."

Because sounds carry, the sound they hear may or may not be in the direction they were listening. An ear pressed against a door to listen for any movement beyond may actually pick up a sound in the rafters above, or in an alcove not far away.

To determine if a character successfully listens, and actually hears something, the character makes a wisdom check with the CL of the check being based upon the following table. The check assumes that there is a noise to be heard, and the CLs of the check are cumulative. The character does not add their level bonus to the check unless they possess a class skill that allows them to listen or hear noise, such as the rogue.

TABLE 7.4 LISTENING UNDERGROUND

Conditions	CL
Noise: Constant	-2
Noise: Intermittent	-1
Noise: Singular	0
Noise: Loud	-2
Noise: Soft	-1
Through 1" door	1
Through 1"+ door	2
Through Stone Wall	4
Through Trapdoor	2
Through Hatch	1
Down Hallway	1 (for every 10 feet)

Monsters Hear Too

The denizens of a dungeon have every bit as much an opportunity to hear the characters coming as the characters do if the creature moves. If it fits the realistic approach of the game, be certain to allow monsters listen checks if and when the characters approach. Of course, some monsters may not be actually listening. They may be asleep, or just with a relaxed guard, but for any creature that might be on the prowl, they should make listen checks against their mental attributes. As a general rule monsters gain bonuses by their natural abilities. Refer to the following table for monster bonuses.

TABLE 7.5 MONSTER LISTEN BONUSES

Monster	Bonus
Aberration	Hit Dice
Animal	+10
Beast	+10
Construct	0
Dragon	Hit Dice
Elemental	-5
Fey	+5
Giant	+5
Humanoid	Hit Dice
Magical Beast	Hit Dice
Monstrous Humanoid	+5
Ooze	N/A
Exraplanar	Hit Dice
Plant	N/A
Shapechanger	Hit Dice
Vermin	+10
Undead, Common	0
Undead, Extraordinary	+5
Undead, Unique	Hit Dice

COMBAT

The combat rounds underground unfold exactly as they do above ground as initiative, order of play, damage and to hit rolls are concerned. However, certain weapons and spells act differently when used. For a more realistic approach to underground battle, use the following rules.

Missile Weapons: The range of these weapons is reduced to the length of the hall or room. Any miss almost always results in a spear, arrow, bolt, or javelin striking a hard surface and breaking. Every spent missile weapon must save vs. crushing blow or be broken (refer to the equipment wastage charts in Chapter 9).

Two-handed Weapons: Many halls and passageways are narrow, often not more than 10 feet across. In battle, such confined spaces impact everyone. Combat does not occur in a static field where two people stand and hit each other over the head in turns. Rather it is fluid and moves back and forth with many ducks, dodges, parries, slices, and swings. Use of two handed weapons is difficult: when someone uses a two-handed weapon, any friendly person within 10 feet of the wielder can become an unintended target. With each miss of the intended target, the wielder must roll a second to-hit roll against the person or persons in the area. If more than one, the CK must randomly determine whom the blow falls upon. If a successful hit is scored that person takes half normal damage.

Pole Arms: Many pole arms are useless underground. Use of the pike for instance is impossible. Other pole arms require a great deal of space to wield. Any two handed pole arm such as a bardiche suffers a -4 from all swings.

TIME

Encouraging and allowing characters to rest underground is always a good idea. When they become wasted from too much battle or encountering too many traps, it is best to make sure the players are aware that their characters have used up much of their strength and might want to look for a quiet place to hole up. Use that time to bring the horrors of the underdark back to them, through harassing sounds, movements, etc. It is ill advised to randomly roll and destroy characters on random encounters, unless it fits the purpose and tone of the adventure. Doing so creates an impossible encounter mentality amongst players and tends to put them off from the game and leaves them with an impression of dungeons being deadly.

This is not to say that characters should never die in the underdark, but the CK must take more caution than normal in managing encounters in the dungeon and the passage of time. Allowing characters time and space to heal is always a good thing.

Another way to handle the problem of non-stop combat is to encourage the players to know that the dungeon does not have to be cleared out in one session. Entering the dungeon and leaving multiple times allows characters to regroup and heal. Of course, this allows the denizens of the dungeon to do so as well, but that is part of the challenge of underground adventures.

BUILDING DUNGEONS

Several factors are vital to the development of a thriving — and realistic — dungeon, whether it be nothing more than a long lost collapsed mine, or the bustling underbelly of a metropolis. Each will share elements that define what it is, and each will have things that are unique. The former greatly assists a Castle Keeper in dungeon building, providing basic guidelines and quick-and-gritty playing, while the latter strikes a chord of creativity, letting the mind wander and develop as the game and setting needs. None of the following should be classified as canon and should be changed to suit the development schemes created by the Castle Keeper. However, they are provided as a groundwork fundamentalism, and to provoke ideas.

PURPOSE

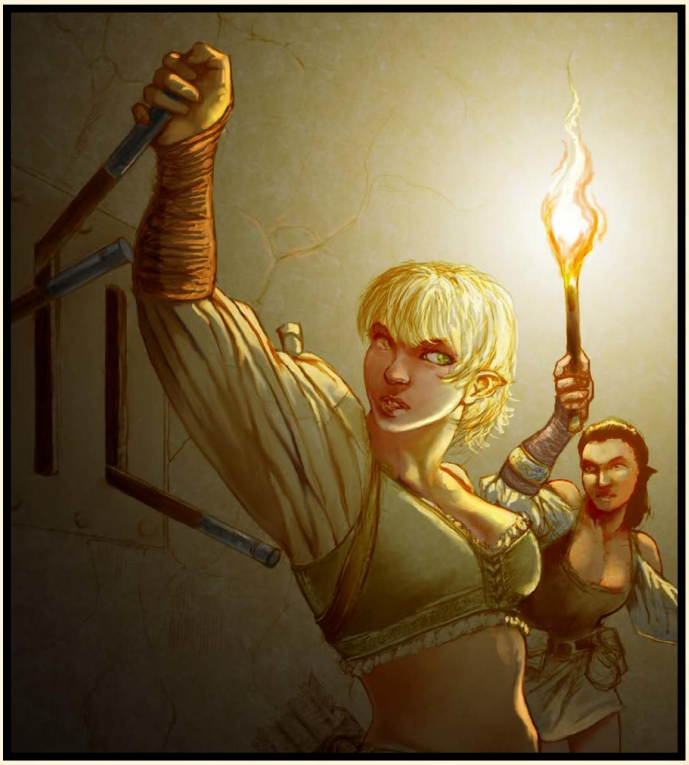
Of fundamental importance is the reason a dungeon exists. Some are natural, carved by water and beast, and others are constructed, cut by brute force and levied with magic. Should a dungeon be a prison, or a home? Perhaps it is a temple or a tomb. Knowing the answer to this question will help a Castle Keeper define features encountered, as well as adding depth to the campaign.

Shelter: A dungeon built for shelter is a protective place, whether designed to keep the weather out, or to house entire nations. They are built to be secure and safe. Often, there is a centralized structure within the dungeon where those it guards can collect and gather, usually stockpiled with wealth and equipment, as well as food and water. Such places are always well guarded. If a sheltering dungeon is large and occupied by intelligent beings, it will ordinarily function as a city of sorts, and be very active; such places fall outside the scope of this work, however. Rarely rushed, the interiors are crafted with intense care, and will often bear marks reminiscent of those that use, or once used, the dungeon. Litter will not normally occur in an active dungeon, though monstrous occupants might not care. If rushed, the interiors will have a ramshackle and rustic feel, and this is especially true for shelters found in caverns. Litter, such as broken lanterns, might be found throughout the dungeon. A dungeon of this sort will always have sections which serve specific uses such as latrines, food storage, and others, in a logical and easy-access manner.

Economic: A dungeon can be crafted to provide monetary assistance, commonly in the form of a mine. A dungeon of this sort will typically have reminders of its purpose scattered around, from wall-mounted torches to coins and picks lying on the ground. Depending on the nature of the structure and activity, there might even be workable lodes remaining. An economic dungeon does not need to be a mine, as it could function as a secretive location for the trafficking of illicit goods and services, or even a means to hide such things. In the latter case, all manner of lethal traps are prone to exist, though in the former cases, typically only natural traps such as explosive or corrosive gasses will be present. Cave-ins are a potential and deadly risk.

Military: Used to house forces, weapons, and to function as a defensive structure, a dungeon of this sort is a well-guarded and vicious place. However, if inactive, age will deteriorate and weaken the structure, though remains, especially those of corpses and their arms and armor, will be left behind. Walls are usually thick, and numerous secret passages will be present, as will stockpiles of gear, food, and water. Murder holes and other defensive constructs are likely to exist in this sort of dungeon as well. An active military installation always has guards and sentries that are well prepared and trained for defense.

Prison: Dungeons of this kind are built to keep things in, whether they are people, items, or monsters. This type of dungeon was the maximum security prison of its day, and should be assumed to be



equal to a maximum security environment. Prison dungeons are very effective, laced and riddled with traps and false passages. Every door will be barred, locked, and reinforced, and keys are difficult to obtain. There is normally a single, or a series in larger dungeons, of exact pathways that connect to every section of the dungeon, but can only be accessed with special techniques. An active prison will always have guards and look-outs, but they are not necessarily well-trained. If the dungeon also has a military purpose, the guards will be highly trained, elite forces. Also, the active dungeon will contain a number of items held within, befitting the specific purpose of the dungeon itself. The nature of the imprisonment helps determine some basic features of the dungeon. For example, a prison constructed to house lawbreaking spellcasters must have means to prevent or limit magic use within its walls.

Religious: Tombs, temples, and sanctuaries are the typical dungeon type, though large cemeteries and mausoleums are not uncommon. As a religious structure, icons and relics of the faith and culture of those building the dungeon will be very commonplace. Murals and depictions of stories from the religion's canon will adorn the walls. The nature of the faith determines if there are traps, their severity, and many other aspects. For example, a temple to a God of Thieves would be expected to contain many traps, both of the annoying and lethal variety, often intermixed or overlapping. Several alcoves and bedchambers, as well as centers of worship will exist within the structure. Faiths of an evil nature, or those that are typically outlawed, will often create emergency exits for the high priests. Of utmost value in this sort of dungeon are the holy relics and writings, varied in number by the needs and means of those residing within, and these will always be well guarded and protected with powerful divine magic. Active religious

dungeons are guarded and maintained by the clergy, though some, especially those of a warlike mindset, will have trained and equipped warriors on call.

Experiment: Experimental dungeons are places where the extraordinary is performed. Whether powerful magic, twisted and oft perverse crossbreeding, architectural principles, or the feasibility of a new technology, a dungeon of this type exists to be a playground of the unique. Everything within its walls serves to further its purpose, generally crafted in such a manner as to be a labyrinth of the bizarre. A more mundane structure, however, will appear quite ordinary, having standard features. More often than not, the builder of the dungeon infuses it with bits of their personality, and the structure reflects it. Note, however, that experimental dungeons are not necessarily the products of madmen or the insane, but these do compose the great majority of such structures.

Note: Seldom does a dungeon serve a single purpose, though it is not impossible for that to happen. As such, a Castle Keeper should choose, or roll, as many of the above options as is fitting for the concept. For a completely random dungeon, it is suggested that at least two rolls are made, with a duplicate result being the only result; i.e., the dungeon is of the rare sort built for a single, and often very effective, purpose.

BUILDER

Who built a dungeon is, arguably, just as important as why the dungeon exists. Each condition of creation imparts a certain level of similarity, and these will become standard and well-known to those who dwell in the fantasy world of the campaign. Dwarves, for example, might be known for their high, vaulting archways, and purple worms leave perfectly smooth tunnels wherever they pass. These trademarks of construction add great depth and allow for creative descriptions, giving a lasting, and enjoyable experience when dungeon delving. Note that a dungeon's builder, if some sort of creature, does not have to be the current resident of the dungeon.

Intelligent Race: Creatures with intelligence and knowledge will use these to their advantage, crafting structures of heightened utility to their own needs. They typically have some sort of trademark, often dictated by religious or cultural elements which they use in nearly everything they make. Some have preferences and consistently use the same materials and motifs, some are varied and wild, and some use brute force and slave labor, leading to self-identifying graffiti or abnormal features. In all cases, a dungeon built by an intelligent race will always use the location to its greatest advantage, and will serve its purpose fully. In mixed structures, where part of the dungeon was formed by natural events and part handcrafted, an intelligent race will place doors and other small structures. The following table is a sampling of the possible races which are capable of building dungeons:

TABLE 7.6 INTELLIGENT RACES

d20 Roll	Intelligent Race
1-3	Dwarf
4	Gnome
5	Goblin
6-10	Human
11	Kobold
12	Giant
13	Dragon
14	Drow Elf
15	Undead
16	Prysmal Eye
17	Ogre
18	Troll
19	Halfling
20	Orc

Burrowing Monster: Some beast, whether intelligent or not, with the natural ability to burrow through ground, is responsible for the groundwork of the dungeon, created simply by the creature's own movement. Sometimes, such a monster is controlled via magic, such as the use of earth elementals or the enslavement of worms, and it still qualifies as this sort of construction method. Areas formed in such a manner do not naturally have doors or traps, and generally have very smooth and reflective surfaces, resembling large tubes rather than a hallway. Some creatures leave trails of porous holes, where appendages like tentacles traveled. Such dungeons are typically very stable, provided there is not an excessive amount of passageways, and will generally become the lair of a beast of similar size and ability as that which formed it. Any creature with burrowing as a form of movement can create a dungeon of this sort. Note that even low or non-intelligent creatures usually have escape passages, and such dungeons are prone to have numerous, long, winding sections.

Natural Conditions: Weather and environmental conditions cause the creation of these types of dungeons, taking centuries to develop, and are always classified as a living dungeon. Standard features are typical to caves, with stalactites and stalagmites being common, as is fungal growths and other natural subterranean plants. Dungeons of this sort do not have native doors or traps, though they can be subject to cave-ins and other natural disasters.

Magic: Forged entirely of magic, through use of spells such as *transmute mud to rock* and *earthquake*, a dungeon of this sort is crafted with specific needs in mind, as the power necessary to construct it is enormous. These places are often home to myriad magical traps and devices, and are often very confusing and labyrinthine. A dungeon born of magic is exceptionally rare, and when they do exist tend to be very small, functioning as a workshop, home, or laboratory for some powerful spellcaster.

LOCATION

Location plays a key role in the development and construction of a dungeon. Not only does it often directly relate to cost, but also transportation of goods, availability, and ease of construction are key ingredients to its successful completion. In addition, where the dungeon sits determines many things about the dungeon. For example, a dungeon created within an underground coral reef is not going to be built by dwarves, though it would probably function as a very effective prison. Some dungeons sit under cities, and some are enlarged portions of fallen castles. Others are caverns crisscrossing a mountain passage, and still others are bi-planar gateways between worlds.

TABLE 7.7 LOCATIONS

d20 Roll	Dungeon Location
1-10	Terrain [See Table 3.1]
11-13	Civilization
14-16	Ruins
17	Underwater
18	Aerial
19	Planar
20	Combination [Roll Twice]

Terrain: The dungeon lies in a natural environment, carved into the ground from above. Some terrains are easier to build into than others; it is much easier to carve a dungeon into the granite of a mountainside than to create one in a swamp. A dungeon of this sort will typically be composed of materials readily available to its terrain, though imported goods are possible. Such things, however, should be reserved for special rooms and areas. Natural dangers, too, are governed by the sort of environment in which a dungeon resides, so that there is little chance of stepping in quicksand while exploring a granite floor, but the likelihood of such an incident increases dramatically in a swampy location. Accessibility is a major factor when dealing with a location, making some environments more likely to be selected than others, depending on the needs of the one constructing the dungeon.

TABLE 7.8 TERRAIN

d20 Roll	Terrain Location
1-8	Plains
9-11	Desert
12-14	Hills
15-16	Forest
17-19	Mountains
20	Swamp or Jungle

Civilization: Resting beneath the surface of a settlement, whether a city, a castle, or even a single family dwelling, this sort of dungeon is located as close to sentient beings as possible. They are normally well known and active, but that is not always the case, such as the hidden subways used by a thieves' guild, for example. The deeper a dungeon of this sort goes, the more likely it is to be occupied by foul creatures, and the less standardized it becomes. Sometimes, the civilization springs into being because of the dungeon beneath it, and at other times, they co-exist without either being the wiser.

Ruins: Lost and buried under the fallen remains of a settlement, a dungeon found in ruins is often forgotten and riddled with dangers, occupied with a variety of creatures possessing it as their home. These dungeons were once used for a particular purpose, and they may still function as such, but they never have their original occupants, save them being undead in form. It is likely that any known location of a ruined dungeon will have been explored and pillaged for its loot. Traps and doors are generally in poor shape and may not function properly.

Underwater: Sunken beneath the waves and tides, an underwater dungeon is usually crafted from some sort of rock or coral, typically serving as a home or lair for an aquatic creature though sentient races can, and will, construct such dungeons for any reason. These dungeons are normally difficult, if not impossible, for land-based creatures to discover and explore, and are limited in size by the availability of their material. Doors do not normally exist within the structure, though traps, especially those of a poisonous nature, are often used. Castle Keepers are encouraged to develop these dungeons only when means to explore them are readily available to the characters in the campaign.

Aerial: Almost always crafted from magic, an aerial dungeon is a lethal venture for any character lacking the means to fly, as a solid floor is not likely to exist. These dungeons are very different than most others, as they are capable, usually, of moving, albeit, at a very slow speed. Some aerial castles, however, are stationary and exist within clouds, formed as a sort of treasury for powerful giants or dragons. Disorienting, the walls of an aerial castle are usually transparent, with doors and non-magical traps being generally nonexistent.

Planar: Crossing barriers of existence itself, a planar dungeon is either wholly composed of some otherworldly material, or is a bridge between two or more realities. Such dungeons are very dangerous, and often are the lairs of very powerful creatures. These dungeons cannot exist without being constructed by magic, and when found, are usually part of a prison complex or the laboratory of a potent spellcaster. The treasure one can obtain within a planar dungeon is generally unmatched, though the risk in getting it is very high. Unless a planar dungeon contains elements of the normal world, anything non-magical is unlikely to be present.

For more information on building dungeons consult Robert Doyel's **Engineering Dungeons**.

TUNNELING AND MINING

Table 7.9 Tunnel Rate per Minute lists sample rates at which a group of five miners working on a 10 square foot area of the listed material may dig in a single minute. In the case of large creatures such as giants and elementals, it is the distance that

a single member of these species may dig in a single round. The listed creatures are given due to their commonality in a subterranean environment, though it is not an exclusive list and could contain other creatures based on the campaign setting.

Mining may be done for no longer than 8 hours per day, including breaks. Working miners longer than this duration reduces the depth to which they may cut the material by 50% for every hour after 8 hours.

In the case of a mixed group of diggers, such as a PC party with a mixture of humans, gnomes, and dwarves, use the average distance that all races can cut by all of the races.

If fewer miners can be found, their rate is reduced by 20% for every missing miner of the given type. If more are to be had their rate is increased by 50% for each additional increment of five. Again in the case of giants, earth elementals and so on, this addition is added by a single additional miner.

Note that mining and digging in this manner makes a considerable amount of noise and may only be done using the proper tunneling and digging tools. Metal tools striking against stone let out an audible clang which carries up to 100 feet in any direction and felt by creatures that are sensitive to seismic vibrations. The Castle Keeper should roll for random encounters where appropriate to reflect the noises made by such clanging and excavating.

TABLE 7.9 TUNNELING RATE PER MINUTE

Race of Miner	Earth	Soft Stone	Hard Stone
Halfling or Human	1 ft.	.5 ft.	.25 ft.
Gnome or Kobold	1.5 ft.	1ft.	.5 ft.
Orc or Hobgoblin	1.75 ft.	1.5 ft.	.75 ft.
Goblin	2 ft.	1.75ft.	1 ft.
Dwarf	2.5 ft.	2 ft.	1.5 ft.
Stone Giant	10 ft.	5ft.	2.5 ft.
Earth Elemental	15ft.	10 ft.	5 ft.
Xorn	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.

GASSES

Caverns may frequently become filled with noxious gasses that build up over time. The gasses may be the byproduct of rotting fungi or corpses, or of sulfurous and methane emissions escaping from fissures in the earth that have built up over time in a sealed chamber.

Poisonous gasses force a constitution save to any living beings within their area. **Table 7.9 Tunnel Rate per Minute** lists the effects and CL of some gasses.

TRAPS

Traps can cause damage and can stun, disable, trip or otherwise cause the person entering them to be incapacitated for one or more rounds. Determine the CL of a trap by determining its complexity. For each die of damage and extra effect, the challenge level is increased by one. Elaborate traps range from CL 1-10.

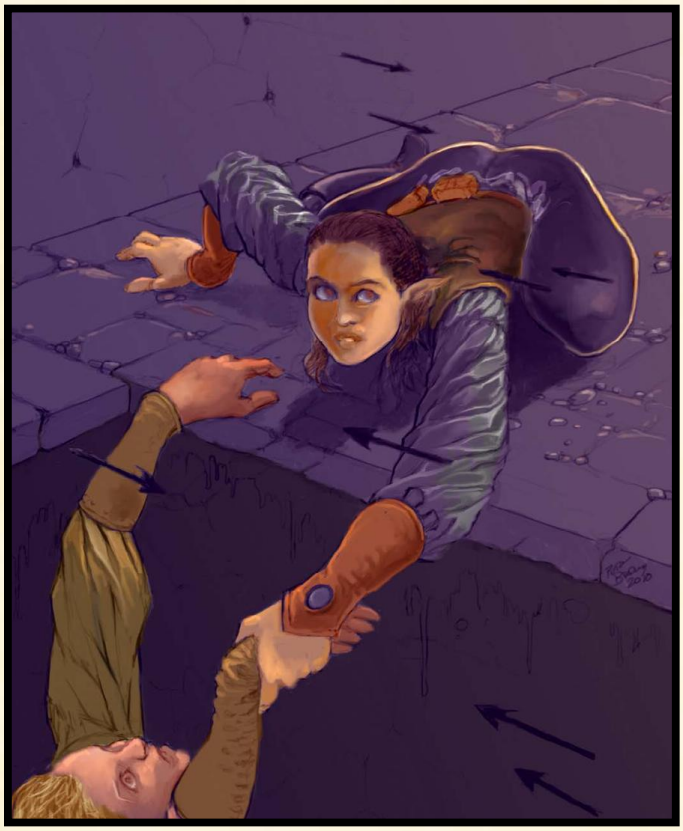
Example: A simple trap such as a pit trap with wood or leaf covering or even wooden planks appearing as a floor, and which depend solely on weight to spring, has a CL 1 and has a complexity level one. If one were to add a spring to that and have it act as a resetting trap door, it's a complexity level 5. If one were to make it such that the trap were spring loaded to rest, constructed of stone and which depended on a combination of weight or location to set it off, that would be a complexity level 8. Traps using magic are often a complexity level 10.

This section describes some examples of commonly encountered traps, and gives a loose framework to help the CK develop more insidious traps of their own design. The traps listed here have been encountered often enough by adventurers to be listed as "basic" traps. They are by no means all-inclusive, and creativity on the part of the CK is required to keep the players on their toes.

All traps have a basic framework; they are mechanical or magical deterrents to some action from the characters. Most traps are designed to harm the PCs, while others simply seek to slow their progress, imprison them, or thoroughly annoy them!

TABLE 7.10 EFFECTS OF GAS

Gas	Effect	Secondary Effect	Save	Special
Methane	Nausea, Vomiting	Euphoria Confusion, Death	Challenge Level 5+1 per round of contact. Save checked every round.	Flammable: Open flame ignites gas for 6d6 damage to all within gas, save for ½.
Carbon Dioxide	Lethargy, Dizziness: -2 to Siege Checks.	Sleep, eventual death.	Challenge Level 4+1 per round of contact. Save checked every round.	Nonflammable: Squelches candles, torches/non-magical fires.
Sulfurous Gas	Blisters skin, air passages dealing 1d6 points damage/round. Con Save/Half.	Asphyxiation:1d2 Con/Round Until Dead.	Challenge Level 4+1 per round of contact. Save checked every round.	Fog Cloud: -4 to Wisdom checks to observe locations, directions, foes.
Butane	Slowed to ½ normal speed unless immune to cold.	Asphyxiation/Death:1d2 Con/ Round Until Dead.	Challenge Level 3+1 per round of contact. Save checked every round.	Flammable: Open flame ignites gas for 3d6 points of fire damage to all within the gas effects.



Whatever the end result of a trap, they all start out the same, with a trigger. The trigger of a trap is nearly anything the Castle Keeper can imagine, such as opening a chest or door, stepping on a pressure plate, reaching in the dragon-head statue for the hidden lever, etc. The key is to make the trigger something interesting, either that the PCs want to touch when it's bad for them or something they don't want to touch when it's beneficial. The key to a good trigger is to make the method of setting off the trap obvious to the players, but tempting enough that they just have to try it anyway!

After deciding on a trigger, the CK needs to determine the general effect of the trap. Many Keepers already have the effect of the trap in their minds. There is something really exciting about finding a new way to blow up your players' favorite characters. That being said, some balancing factors should be considered. Traps can injure, incapacitate, slow, confuse, and sometimes even help a party. Any of the effects of a trap should be used to advance the adventure. Think of traps as the ultimate NPCs; they sit and wait until needed, can be eternally static, and don't need any reason to exist, other than to thwart the PCs. Effects of traps should usually be in the same general threat range as a "common" encounter. If the PCs are exploring a wilderness tracking a group of orc raiders, then encountering a few snares, a tripwire or possibly a spiked pit would not be out of the question. Following a path to the orc encampment and being targeted by a multiple spring-loaded poisoned spear trap is excessive. Unless there is a good plot reason, excessively damaging traps are just no fun for players, and in turn no fun for the CK. Now, if the PCs are higher level, and are invading a famous lich's tomb, all bets are off.

Effects for traps follow the same basic rule of thumb as spell damages. A Challenge Level 1 trap may hinder or incapacitate a PC, or inflict 1d4 or 1d6 damage. It should challenge but not necessarily kill a 1st level PC that falls victim to it. A CL 6 trap can (and should) kill or maim a 1st level PC. It should challenge an entire party of 3rd level PCs, and be a match for any single 6th level character. A good rule to follow is traps of CL 1-3 inflict approximately 1d6 damage per level, have a poor to medium chance to hit a PC, paralyze, poison or incapacitate. CL 4-6 traps do 2d6 damage per level, they have a good chance to hit, use more toxic poison, drain energy levels, and try to kill at least one PC. Traps in the CL 7-9 continue to do 2d6 damage per level, almost always hit, use poison gases that affect an area, spells with no saves, and have special effects designed to disable the entire party. The CL 10 trap is the ultimate in trapmaking. They are designed to challenge the highest-level PCs and the best players. CL 10 traps have multiple spell effects, do high levels of damage even if the saving throw is made, are very hard to disable or avoid, and are near the goal of the adventure. A CL 10 trap is not to be used lightly; PC death is certain unless they are very, very careful.

Another component of most traps is a bypass mode. Some traps cannot have a bypass for logistical reasons, so if there is a method to avoid the trap, it's a good idea to put that somewhere in the description as well, i.e. "The well-concealed pit trap in the floor looms immediately beyond the door. However, with a CL 3 check, a qualified PC notices a shifting plate on the floor outside the door that may have something to do with the trap". Bypasses are something the PCs can do to avoid the trap, if they are clever enough to think to look for them. After all, the person who set the trap needed to get past it as well! Bypasses can be something as simple as the correct key to a door or a chest, or as intricate as a console full of dials that have to be aligned perfectly to allow passage. Having a bypass method is completely at the Castle Keeper's discretion. And there is no reason a bypass method for one trap couldn't have a minor trap of its own!

Finding and disabling a trap is fairly well described in the abilities section for each character class that can perform the task (rangers, rogues, assassins, etc.). Unless specifically described in the details of an individual trap, finding or spotting a trap is as difficult as the traps Challenge Level, i.e. a CL 5 traps can be detected with a CL 5 Find Traps check. If there is no PC with the Find Traps ability, the CK may allow other party members a chance to locate a trap, if they have some reason to know one is about (such as a wizard looking for a trapped bookshelf in a rival wizard's library) but the CL check is doubled in such a case, and no magical trap may be found in this manner. Some traps can be hidden better, and the CK should feel free to add to the CL if there is a story reason for it. The CL shouldn't be bumped up too high compared to the level of the trap, however, so that the party does have some chance to discover their doom before its too late. The same logic goes for disabling a trap, but a little more leeway is acceptable in the CL rating for a disabling action. Most traps can be disabled with a similar Disable Traps

check as the traps Challenge Level. It would not be uncommon for some traps to be impossible to disable or the check is twice that of a "normal" version of the trap. If the Disable Check is considerably higher than the traps Challenge Level, the CK should award greater Experience Points if the trap is defeated.

A list of "common" trap descriptions is below. This list is by no means exhaustive! Creativity is very important in trapmaking. Make the PC tremble in fear as they round a corner and gaze upon a great chamber, empty save for the lone chest sitting in the center, with a golden key suspended above it.

Room/Hallway Traps

Falling Block Trap CL 2: The falling block can either be a set trap or a natural occurrence from an unstable area. The PC enters the 5 ft. area directly below the block, and one or several stones fall to strike the PC. The stone strikes with an attack bonus of +3 and it inflicts 2d6 damage. Find traps CL 2, disable traps CL 2. A bypass for the trap is a hidden lever on the wall just before entering the traps square.

Giant Boulder Trap Cl5: The PCs notice a 10 ft. diameter hole in the wall. To their surprise, a great rumbling is hear as a gigantic round boulder comes out of the hole directly towards them! The boulder can strike all PCs in a 10 ft. wide path. The PCs can attempt a dexterity check CL 5 to throw themselves out of the path of the onrushing bolder. Failing the save the PC takes 6d6 crushing damage, half with a save. Find traps CL 3, disable traps CL 4. A bypass might be a pressure plate in the floor that locks the boulder in place.

Chain Lightning Trap CL 10: This trap is triggered once a character crosses the center of the chamber dealing 10d6 points of damage to the character triggering it, and 5d6 points of damage to up to 10 additional targets. A successful dexterity save CL 7 reduces this damage by half. The trap may be discovered by use of a find traps ability CL 12. It must be disabled via means of a *dispel magic* spell.

Flooding Room Trap CL 5: The PCs fail to notice a wave-engraved pressure plate on the floor. The plate triggers the entry door to seal shut, and water begins flooding into the room through the grates! The water fills the room in 5 rounds, and the PCs must escape in that time or begin to drown. See the rules on drowning later in this book. PCs with light or moderate encumbrance may attempt to swim to the surface with a CL 5 strength check, but those with heavy or worse encumbrance cannot get off the ground. Swimming to the surface gains the PCs 2 rounds before they begin to drown. Find traps CL 6, disable traps CL 5. A bypass for this room is a shifting stone on the floor that drains out the water.

Crushing Ceiling Trap CL 10: Once the PCs enter the trapped square, a grinding noise can be heard by all in the room. The doors slam shut and latch, and the ceiling begins to lower. The PCs have 3 rounds before the ceiling turns them into adventurer paste. PCs in the room when the ceiling lowers fully take 10d6 crushing damage. Find traps CL 5, disable traps CL 6. A good bypass for this trap is a hidden lever counterbalance.

Collapsing Wall Trap CL 3: This trap can be triggered anytime, anywhere. A pressure-plate, tripwire, ray of light, etc. causes one 10 ft. by 10 ft. section of wall to collapse on up to 2 PCs. Damage is 3d6 crushing damage. Find traps CL 3, disable traps CL 3. Bypassing this trap usually means finding it and staying out of the trigger area!

Volatile Gas Trap CL 7: Whether a natural gas formation underground, or a special concoction designed to ignite under certain conditions (e.g. an open flame, adding oxygen to a closed room, etc) the volatile gas trap is very hard to detect until its too late. Many of these traps involved explosive gases, but some corrosive (i.e. acid damage) gases are also included. Damage is 12d6 for explosive gases, and 2d6 per round for corrosive gases. Find traps CL 6, disable trap CL 7, or Find traps CL 7, disable trap CL 8 if a natural occurrence. A bypass for a non-natural trap is a locking plate in the floor just before the trapped area.

Flaming Webs Trap CL 2: A long corridor full of thick, hanging webs. While there is no spider to deal with, the webs are coated in a very flammable substance. If fire of any type is brought into the area, the webs immediately ignite, doing 2d4 fire damage for 1d4 rounds to all in the area. Find traps CL 1, disable trap CL 2. The simple bypass to this trap is to extinguish all flames while passing through the area.

Falling Marbles Trap CL 1: As a PC gets to a certain point in the corridor, a waterfall of marbles comes crashing out of the ceiling, making further progress treacherous. No damage, but movement slowed to half normal in a 10 ft by 20 ft area. Find traps CL 2, disable traps CL 2. A bypass for the marbles is a simple hidden lever on the wall.

Spring-Loaded Arrow Trap CL 2: The arrow trap is a classic. As a PC steps on a pressure plate in an area, a volley of arrows fills the room. Many variations of this trap are possible, so the CK must specifically design this one for a specific encounter. An example is every PC in the room is attacked by 1d4 arrows, each arrow striking for 1d6 points of damage. Other traps of this type may be more accurate, or do more damage. Find traps CL 2, disable traps CL 2. A good bypass for the trap might be a hidden latch on the pressure plate that discharges the arrows.

Spring-Loaded Spear Trap CL 3: Very similar to the arrow trap, the spear trap is another classic, and just as variable. A common version is the "spears behind the false door" trap. The target opening the door is attacked by 3 spears, each doing 1d8 damage. Find traps CL 3, disable traps CL 3. A bypass is a twisting stone outside the door that locks the spears in place.

Pit Trap CL 1: One of the most common traps in adventuring, the pit trap is an "old favorite" for many CKs. Some pit traps are covered with a spring-loaded lid that closes after one or more PCs fall in, and others are simply open all the time. Creatures get a (Challenge Level 4) dexterity Save to avoid falling in the

pit. Damage is a cumulative 1d6 per 10 feet fallen, as given in the Falling Damage section of the **Players Handbook**.Find traps CL 1+, disable traps CL 1+. There is no bypass for an open pit trap, but a twisting stone on the near side of the pit could lock the lidded pit in place.

Pit Trap CL 3: The pit trap is 30 ft deep. It requires a Challenge Level 3 find traps check to locate. It is a Challenge Level 6 to disable due to the strength of the lid and complexity of its latch. Creatures stepping on the trap lid may make a CL 4 dexterity save to avoid falling into the pit. Creatures falling in the pit suffer 6d6 points of damage.

Wall Scythe CL 1: When triggered, a pair of scything blades slice out dealing 4d6 points of damage plus Type IV poison (Dealing 1d8 points of damage and -1 to all attribute checks on a successful save, or 2d8 points damage and striking the victim comatose for 2-8 days).

Spiked Pit Trap CL 3+: A wicked variation of the pit trap, the spiked pit is loaded with sharpened stakes or metal spikes driven into the bottom of the pit. Particularly vile traps are also coated with poison, with a Challenge Level accordingly higher. Creatures get a (Challenge Level 4) dexterity Save to avoid falling in the pit. In addition to the falling damage, the spikes have 1d4 attacks at and each spike does 1d6 damage, plus possibly type I or type III poison, disease, etc. Find traps CL 3, disable traps CL 3. Same type of bypass as for a standard pit trap.

Camouflaged Pit Trap: This pit trap is covered with a thin lacquered canvas coating painted to look like stone, now coated with a fine layer of dust. Beneath the canvas is a lattice of boards, sawed to within 1/100th of an inch set to fall once 250 lbs. of weight is applied. Once this amount of weight gives way, the boards collapse hauling any who stand upon the canvas mat along with them. The trap is 10 ft. x 10 ft. across. Anyone falling down the pit pit takes a cumulative 1d6 per 10 feet fallen. Find traps CL 4, disable traps CL 6.

Razorwire Trap CL 4: This trap consists of a rope or cable with many barbs and pieces of razor bound in it. Usually stretched across a hallway to impede progress, bundles of razorwire make very dangerous projectiles as well. A razorwire blockade can be traveled through at one-quarter speed, or at half-speed with a successful dexterity check at CL 3. If the check is failed, the PC takes 3d6 points of damage and is considered entangled as the spell. Razorwire as a projectile is even worse. It attacks with a +8 to hit, does 4d6 points of damage, and unless the target makes dexterity check at CL 5, they are considered entangled as the spell. Find traps (blockade CL 1, projectile CL 4), disable traps (blockade N/A, projectile CL 4). A bypass for the projectile might be a sliding plate on the floor before the trigger plate. There is no bypass for a blockade other than trying to go through it!

Tripwire Trap CL 1: This is one of the simplest traps, sometimes referred to as "kobold ropes" due to the heavy usage from those humanoids. A simple rope or wire is strung across a cavern, hallway, or room, with the intent to trip the unwary. The wire "attacks" and if it hits, the target must make dexterity check at CL 1 or fall prone. Find traps CL 1, disable traps CL 1. A good bypass for the tripwire trap is finding it and stepping over…hopefully not into a pit trap!

Door Traps

Scything Blade CL 5: Also known as "doorknocker bane", the scything blade trap releases a blade from the jamb of the door to slash down on unsuspecting hands and arms. The blade attacks and does 4d6 points of damage, and has a 1 in 6 chance of impairing the affected limb. An impaired limb is useless for 2d12 rounds. Find traps CL 5, disable traps CL 5. A bypass for this trap is a sliding stone near the doorjamb to lock the blade in place.

Poison Gas Trap CL 7: This seemingly locked door is actually a clever container of toxic CL 7 type IV gas. Any pressure placed on the door, like the pressure used to open a stuck door, will crack the thin material and release the gas. All targets in a 10 ft. radius must make CL 7 saves vs. poison to resist the effects of the gas. Find traps CL 6, disable traps CL 7. The only bypass to this trap is opening the door without placing pressure on a single point.

Poison Handle Trap CL 3: A very popular trick with orcs, the poison handle trap incapacitates anyone who uses a door in the normal way. Touching the elaborate handle of the door brings the target into contact with the nauseating, poisonous concoction. The target will need to make a saving throw vs. CL 3 type III poison. The simple bypass for this trap is to push the door open without using the handle.

Collapsing Doorframe Trap CL 2: Very similar to the collapsing wall trap, the collapsing doorframe trap causes the doorframe and door to fall out onto the target in a loud and distracting fashion. The door "attacks" and does 2d6 damage, as well as alerting any creatures in a 60 ft. radius to the incident. What any creatures do about the incident is up to the CK. Find traps CL 2, disable traps CL 2. Due to the nature of the trap, doors set to collapse are usually false doors with no room behind them, and thus have no bypass.

Container Traps

Contact Poison Trap CL 4: Very similar to the poison handle trap, the container is coated in a nearly invisible CL 3 type III contact poison. Anyone handling the container needs to make a CL 3 save vs. poison to resist the effects. Find traps CL 4, disable traps CL 4. Bypassing this trap requires the use of long tools to open the container.

Poison Needle Trap CL 3: Common in most treasure chests, the poison needle trap is an "old favorite" for many CKs. The needle attacks and inflicts a single point of damage. In addition to the point of damage, the needle injects a CL 3 type III or type IV poison to the target, who needs to make a CL 3 save vs.

poison. Find traps CL 3, disable traps CL 3. A hidden button on the container could bypass this trap.

Spring-Loaded Dart Trap CL 2: Similar to the arrow and spear traps, the springs at the bottom of this container hurl 2d4 darts at all targets in a 10 ft. radius. The darts attack for 1d4 damage per dart. Often these traps are poisoned, which raises the CL accordingly. Find traps CL 2, disable traps CL 2. Bypassing this trap requires moving a secret sliding panel on the side of the container.

SPELLS

A few words on spell traps. The Challenge Level for avoiding or discovering a spell trap is the same as the level of the spell being cast, no matter what the level of the wizard casting the spell. This may seem to contradict the guidelines given above, as spell damage is greater than mechanical trap damage, but that is the nature of magic in the game. Spells do more damage than any mechanical device can, and traps may have multiple spells acting together or in series.

The difference between a *fireball* trap cast by a 10th level wizard and a 20th level wizard is not how hard it is to find or disable the trap, rather it's how bad the consequences are if it goes off! So, all spell traps are based on level of spell, not caster level, for determining the trap CL. A list of the common spells used as traps is provided below. This list is not complete, and spells may be linked together, or be cast simultaneously, as the CK desires.

COMMON SPELL TRAPS

Acid Arrow	Fire Trap
Alarm	Glyph of Warding
Burning Hands	Lightning Bolt
Cloudkill	Magic Aura
Color Spray	Magic Missile
Cone of Cold	Magic Mouth
Confusion	Prismatic Spray
Disintegrate	Scare
Energy Drain	Shocking Grasp
Explosive Runes	Sound Burst
False Trap	Stinking Cloud
Fear	Symbol
Fireball	Transmute Flesh and Stone

ADVANCED TRAPS

Wall of Force and the Pit CL 7: This trap plays on the ego of physical PCs. A simple 10 ft. by 15 ft. trap is in a corridor. The PCs look into the trap, only to discover the bottom is a loooong way down (60 ft. minimum). But, it's only 15 ft. wide, and an easy jump, right? Wrong. One inch beyond the farthest edge of the pit is a permanent *wall of force* that the jumping PC will slam into and begin falling into the pit. The PC can make a dexterity check at CL 7 to catch the edge of the pit before falling to their doom. Now, the PC is dangling above a 60 ft. (or deeper!) pit, and needs to make a Strength check each round to maintain their hold on the edge. The check begins at CL 5, and goes up by one every round the PC hangs on. Should the strength check fail, the PC falls into the pit, hopefully to their death. Find traps CL 7, disarm traps CL 8. A possible bypass is a hidden rune on the near side of the pit, just over the edge that dispels the wall of force.

Teleportation Ring Trap CL 9: This trap is as simple as it is wicked. At a point in the room, the PCs stumble upon the trigger point. The beginning of this trap is a teleportation ring that sends the target to another room, arriving at the apex of a 30 ft. ceiling. The target immediately begins to fall toward the ground, but instead of striking the ground, the target hits another teleportation ring that sends the target back up to the apex of the room. While not damaging at all, this trap is quite deadly, as the cycle will continue as long as some object continues to touch the teleportation rings. A target with no means of flying or stopping their progress will eventually die of thirst or starvation as they cannot get out of the cycle of teleportation rings. The first ring is linked to 6 other chambers, so a total of 6 PCs could be caught in the trap (remember, the rest of the party has NO IDEA where the first PC went!). If more than 6 PCs touch the first ring, the CK is encouraged to come up with a more dastardly end for the foolhardy adventurers (the ring turns into a disintegration field, a gate to another plane, etc.). Find traps CL 8, disable traps CL9. There is no bypass for this trap other than avoiding it.

Featheredge Blade Trap CL 8: A bigger, badder version of the scything blade trap, this one likes to take a little something from the PCs. Usually used on a door, this trap attacks for 1d10 damage, and if the attack roll is an unmodified 18-20, in addition to the damage, the target hand is cut clean off! If this trap is used in a room setting, use the following table to determine the body part struck:

d%	Area
01-11	Left hand
12-22	Right hand
23-33	Left arm
34-44	Right arm
45-55	Left foot
56-66	Right foot
67-77	Left leg
78-88	Right leg
89-00	Head

Find traps CL8, disable traps CL8. A common bypass is a hidden switch/button.

Roguekiller CL 10: One of the legendary traps designed by the great kobold trapmaster, Sourfang the Gnomeslayer. Building on the ego and bravado of rogues, the kobold genius created

one of his greatest works of art. The trap begins with a single ironbound wooden chest placed in the center of a barren 30 ft. square room with a 50 ft. ceiling. A golden key is suspended 5 ft. above the chest on a silver wire. Surrounding the chest is a 20 ft diameter circle of runes. The chest itself is mahogany, with brass-studded iron bands, and does not appear to have a lock of any kind.

The chest is a type of puzzle-box, and does not require a key to open. A successful Intelligence check at CL 10 is required to determine that the chest requires the brass studs to be pressed in a certain order. The PC must make 3 additional Intelligence checks at CL 15 to press the studs in the correct order to open the chest. Once the studs are correctly pressed, there is a loud click in the room as something is unlocked. Unfortunately for the group, the studs on the chest activate 4 sliding panels in the floor outside the circle of runes. Each of the panels is 1 ft by 1 ft, and slides back to reveal a 1 ft deep depression. Appearing in each of the depressions is a *symbol of death*, a *symbol of discord*, a *symbol of insanity*, and a symbol of pain, all cast at 18th level. Each of the symbols can affect the entire room except the area inside the circle, and each is triggered by looking into the depressions.

Touching the suspended key has 3 effects. First, a *prismatic sphere* is created along the circle of runes, effectively blocking any sight in or out of the circle. Second, the key discharges a *shocking grasp* on the target grabbing the key, cast at 18th level. Third, CL 10 type VI poison gas fills the inside of the circle in one round. The gas lasts for 3 rounds, and a save is needed each round. Note that the gas does not escape to the rest of the room due to the *prismatic sphere*. After 3 rounds, the gas is no longer harmful, but it is quite hazy in the confines of the sphere, and any searching or Find Traps checks have a -2 penalty.

The chest may be moved by sliding it directly backwards. Moving the chest reveals a 1 ft. diameter circular hole directly underneath the space the chest occupied. There is a gold and diamond encrusted bracelet hidden in the hole. If anyone reaches into the hole to retrieve the bracelet, the upper edge of the hole snaps closed around the arm/item inserted, and holds fast. No damage is inflicted, however, the target cannot remove whatever was placed in the hole! One round after the hole grasps the PC, the center 10 ft. by 15 ft. section of the circle begins to rise up slowly. Begin a slow 20 count to determine how much time the PCs have. If the PC used a tool to grasp the bracelet, they can let go and jump off the rising platform in time, but if they used a hand, they are held for the entire ride. The section rises up to 20 ft tall, and brushes the PC against the suspended key as it raises, setting off the *prismatic sphere* as if the PC had grasped the key. As the section of floor rises, 2 things become apparent; the rising section is some kind of vault, with bizarre magic runes and words of power covering a gold and adamantine chamber with a single platinum door, and any character trapped on the roof of the vault will come into contact with the sphere very soon!

The runes, the gold and adamantine plating, and the platinum door are all *permanent image* spells designed to hide yet another trap. If the PC looking at the vault disbelieves or dispels the images (CL 18 to dispel), then the real trap on the walls is sprung. In each 5 ft. section of the vault (except where the door is) a small alcove contains a severed medusa's head that is fully animated and deadly. Anyone looking at the vault must make a CL 5 save vs. petrifaction or be turned to stone. Note, if a PC is within 3 ft. of the vault (studying the runes closely, etc.) they may be attacked by the medusa's vipers as well.

If the PCs manage to bypass all these obstacles, then the true object of their efforts is upon them. Looming before the party is the vault door with a single keyhole in the center of the door. The vault itself is lined with lead and gorgon's blood, and resists all attempts to *teleport* or *plane shift* into it. It is not connected to the astral or ethereal planes, so those methods of entry will always fail. The only way into the vault is to pick the lock. The door has an expert level lock, and any PC with a qualifying ability to open locks must beat a CL 10 lock to gain entry.

The interior of the vault is roughly 5 ft. wide by 10 ft. long, covered in scenes and pictures of wicked monsters and devilish images. As soon as the door is opened, a *magic mouth* spell is activated, and the party hears the following "You have succeeded where all others have failed. Congratulations, you have impressed Sourfang the Gnomeslayer. Your deeds shall be known." After the mouth finishes speaking, one of the devilish images pulls itself loose from the ceiling! The image is a stone golem, and it drops to the ground and attacks the PCs as one last layer of defense to the vault. After the PCs defeat the golem, they are free to investigate the vault without further molestation.

It is up to the CK what is inside the vault at this point. If there is a story arc that requires the PCs to find a lost object, then this trap would be a good place to house it. A lot of work should go into getting the vault door open. This trap is not for merely hiding gold and gems. Books of tremendous power, lost artifacts, and soul gems are the kinds of things to be hidden here. But, as always, the CK is encouraged to use this trap and modify it as he/she deems fit. Enjoy!

CHAPTER 8 – AIR AND WATER ADVENTURE

Most games take place on land. Whether in a forest, mountain chain, or in a deep dungeon, the adventure plays out upon terra firma. It is the setting that we are all familiar with, for we live our daily lives on the good old Earth. Very few of us have had broader experiences, having entered the wholly alien world of water and air. These worlds present different challenges for the CK to adjudicate and for the player to navigate, for these worlds lack the solid base we are accustomed to; they present a multi-dimensional world where up and down are the same as left and right. Perception within these realms is different, and the actions our characters take, from moving, to seeing, to spellcasting, and to swinging a sword, all take on different characteristics. The following material establishes a common ground for adventures unfolding on the water, under the water, and in the air.

KEEP IT FUN

Running an adventure off land can be very challenging, but it can be rewarding if pulled off correctly. Foremost, the CK must understand that many players do not have any reference points for adventuring on the deep water. When the adventure plunges the characters into a deep forest, it is not a hard for the players to imagine the dark, twisting trees, as many of us have been in a forest. But when the adventure unfolds upon an endless rolling body of water ending only where the sky's horizon begins, it is much harder for the players to relate to the experience. For such adventures, the descriptions must be on target to convey the numbing reality of the incessant, tumbling waves.

Much like waterborne adventures, aerial adventures also lack familiar terrain reference points for players, so the CK needs to describe the experience, while keeping the descriptions of the endless expanse of sky interesting enough to keep players engaged. Aerial adventures offer some limited challenges for the adventurer to overcome, but these are nothing near the scope of the challenges inherent to certain types of terrestrial terrain. Tracking weather, managing encounters, and tracking time are the best weapons in the CK's arsenal in making the aerial adventure more enjoyable for players.

With this in mind, use a setting like the ocean as a backdrop; do not expend a great deal of time describing it at length. Rather, as the game unfolds, mention the lapping water or atmosphere in short, gripping sentences, and then return to the adventure at hand. Note that land encounters occur frequently, with the CK usually rolling for wandering monsters at least six times a day and several times at night (see Chapter 12). This should not be

the case with waterborne or airborne adventures. Additionally, sea monsters tend to be either easy to kill or very deadly, with very few being in between, and ship-bound characters have no place to run to avoid them. If the ship goes down, all hands go with it. Many of the same principles apply for aerial combat. Time should pass faster than normal allowing several days to pass with minimal descriptions is easy to do and does not detract from the adventure itself.

CKs should allow NPCs a greater role in sea adventures. The mates of the ship, or even the captain, become more important to survival in the adventure and they interact with the characters more, if for no other reason than their constant proximity. CKs should develop these characters fully, as giving them personalities and quirks may lead the adventure in unexpected directions.

During water-based or aerial adventures, CKs should keep careful track of the weather, as it takes on a more significant role in the game than when dealing with land adventures. Massive cloud banks moving across the horizon offer a host of adventuring opportunities, from braving the wrath of unrestricted winds to pelting rain and ice.

Also, some nautical knowledge on the CK's part can also be very important to making sea-based adventures more realistic. CKs may want to have players make multiple checks during the adventure to steer the ship, locate obstacles on the horizon, to keep from being swept overboard, or to avoid any of the other multiple hazards inherent to living aboard a ship. These checks will make the water-based adventuring experience seem more real to the players.

Do not shy away from the danger of the setting. The dangers proffered, though deadly, often offer the players some of the most exciting combats they could ever encounter. A ship of raving corsairs attacking the boat offers death, slavery, or heroism in the extreme. Pushed to the brink, the characters must perforce fight courageously or fall into the deep blue, the deep quiet, as they say on Aihrde, or if in the air, fall thousands of feet to a certain, very messy death.

Magic, too, should be more common. Allowing the gods an active role on the sea and in the heavens brings them ever closer to the characters and offers the CK and the players an out if their characters stand upon the threshold of life or death. These settings offer the perfect opportunity to explore and expand the world's mythology, bringing the characters into contact with worlds lost at sea and the ghostly powers that may remain within them.

WEATHER

CKs should track weather conditions at sea and air just as they track the conditions for land. The conditions range from none to severe. To check the weather, roll a d20 once, referring to **Table 8.1 Weather at Sea/Air**. Make checks once a week or once a day, depending on the Castle Keeper's preference.

TABLE 8.1 WEATHER AT SEA/AIR

Chance	Conditions
1-10	None
11-15	Moderate
16-18	Bad
19-20	Severe

None: No weather of appreciable note. The water is calm, the winds have died, and the boat can only move under minimum sail. All dexterity checks are made at a minimum of Challenge Level 1.

Moderate: Attaining full sail is possible, but only by skilled seamen. Unskilled seamen must make the necessary attribute check (wisdom or intelligence) at CL 5. The water current is strong and/or the winds strong enough to power the sail under normal speed. Movement is rapid, but it is safe for experienced hands. All dexterity checks are made at a minimum of Challenge Level 2.

Bad: Storms, whether ice or rain, include wind and very choppy water, usually accompanied by the occasional large trough. Full sail is possible and attained by skilled seamen. All dexterity checks are made at a minimum of Challenge Level 5.

Severe: Severe weather conditions are driving rainstorms, white-outs, snowstorms, wind storms, and any conditions associated with a hurricane or typhoon. All dexterity checks are made at a minimum of Challenge Level 10.

ADVENTURES ON THE WATER

As humans, the deep blue calls to us. The constant, tumbling water, crashing waves, and the deep blue gulf all hold a place in our subconscious that stirs a primeval longing. This longing, a feeling of distant desire colored by the promise of danger, is incomprehensible but powerful. Out there, beyond the land, lies a world beyond our control; it taunts us with dreams of power or nightmares of impotence. The ocean offers itself up as the ultimate challenge, for to steel our resolve and venture forth upon that frothy spray is to succeed or die. The ocean and the deeps seas promise wonderful adventure. What they deliver is entirely up to the Castle Keeper's imagination.

When charting an adventure on the water, the Castle Keeper must take into account the constantly changing terrain, the nature of encounters, and the finality of defeat. Furthermore, the CK must understand the setting and its limitations. There are, after all, only so many types of water as compared to mountains, hills, forests, swamps, plains, etc. on the land. These limitations often lead to boring settings and adventures in which the players find themselves powerless against a setting that is far more dangerous than anything they have encountered before. Falling off the side of a fast-moving ship in chain armor sends one to the briny deep extremely quickly, and usually with only a single dice check. Because of the danger to the characters and the risks of boring the players, CK should come to grips with the setting before embarking upon it.

THE SETTING

Several types of water adventures exist. These always take you off land, whether on broad lakes, seas, or upon the ocean. Swamps and river adventures tend to be similar to land adventures, so they are not considered water adventures for this section's purposes. However, for the movement of boats on these bodies of water, refer to **Table 8.2 Movement of Vessels**. Adventures in the water usually land the characters on a boat of some type, or at the very most, on a small deserted island. But the setting itself is the deep water, where entry means death unless some major precautions are taken, whether magical or otherwise.

Deep Water: Perhaps the most common water adventures are those in the deep oceans or seas. Characters embark upon a ship, whether oar or sail, and begin crossing the water. These adventures can be very long and perilous journeys. In such adventures, the characters might be pirates or pirate hunters, or they could be explorers who hop from island to island. The important thing for the CK to remember in such adventures is that the ship is the only thing between the characters and certain death. If the ship goes down, the characters generally die, or at the very least, they find themselves lost in small boats at the mercy of the ocean, the winds, weather, and the currents. The ocean is always moving and storms are deadly, as the seascape offers no protection from the winds that blow water and spray across the surface. Like few other terrains, the ocean is a perilous place to venture. The monsters, too, are generally perilous. Deep-water creatures are often huge and deadly in the extreme. Other monsters live in the water and come out only through magic, and interacting with them becomes difficult and restrictive as most characters cannot breathe underwater.

Shallow Water: These adventures take place in the shallow areas around land masses, along reefs, near beaches, and the like. They involve all the story arcs from deep-water adventures, but they offer the characters a glimmer of hope if their ship sinks, as swimming a few miles is at least possible. The opportunities for adventure in shallow water dwarf those in the deep sea; monsters from the land may haunt the ship's path, as well as monsters from the deep; shipwrecks loom on every horizon; characters interact with encountered natives, whether savage or civilized; and a far greater variety of not-so-deadly monsters lie in the waters off the coast. Shallow-water adventures are easier to manage and the characters do not always face imminent death.

Ship: Almost any adventure the characters embark upon lands them in a ship. But the ship doesn't have to be only a means of transportation. It can be a place of adventure itself, with the ocean or coastal waters being only a backdrop or setting, so to speak. Many players enjoy such adventures, especially if the CK has done his homework and can use enough technical terms to make the whole experience believable. These adventures are, per their nature, restricted, as the boat is a closed environment. However, the magic ripe in any C&C game lends itself to pushing the boundaries of adventure, so a ship could be a gate to multiple extra-dimensions and itself serve as a setting backdrop.

Lake: Lake adventures remain the forgotten stepchild of C&C adventures. Preconceived notions place the lake in a very contained environment, and though this may be the case, the lake offers a wide scope of adventuring opportunities. Some lakes are extremely large, more akin to small seas than actual inner lakes, requiring broad-beamed sailing vessels to cross them. Small lakes often lie nestled in wilderness areas, attracting all manner of man and monster, and these may require only 15 minutes to cross by canoe. Lake adventures offer the best of both worlds: ship travel and safety from certain death.

WATER MOVEMENT

Moving across water poses a different set of challenges for the Castle Keeper and the players. As noted above, there are many different types of water adventures. Consult **Table 8.2 Movement of Vessels** for the standard speeds of various crafts and the effects of conditions on their movement rates. Swimming movement, above and below water, represents its own challenges.

TABLE 8.2 MOVEMENT OF SHIPS

Vessel Type	Min. Sail/ Oar*	Normal Sail/Oar *	Full Sail/ Oar*
Barge, Small, Under Sail	5	10	20
Barge, Small, Under Oar	1	2	2
Barge, Large, Under Sail	2	5	10
Barge, Large, Under Oar	.5	1	1
Blockade Runner	15	25	35
Brigantine	5	15	25
Dugout / Rowboat	5	10	15
Carrack	20	30	40
Cog	15	25	35
Cruiser	20	25	30
Cutter	35	42	50
Dhow	15	25	35
Fishing Smack	10	20	25
Floating Palace	5	7	10
Frigate	20	30	50
Galleon	30	40	50
Galley	25	35	50
Hulk	Current	Current	Current
Longship	20	35	45
Schooner	40	50	60
Sloop	15	25	45
Treasure Ship	25	30	40
Warship	20	30	40

* Indicates the number of miles traveled in 8 hours.

When using **Table 8.2 Movement of Vessels**, cross-reference the ship's condition to determine the maximum speed it can attain. Minimum sail means the ship is understaffed and cannot attain maximum sail. Normal sail means the crew may be

understaffed but can at least attain minimal use of its resources. Full sail requires the ship have a full crew onboard and able to deploy the ship's full resources, achieving a maximum sail/oar. If a ship has damaged sails and cannot move without oar power, its speed is reduced by 80%. Speed is measured in nautical miles, and it represents how fast the vessel can travel over the course of 8 hours under its normal travel method (sail or row, for example), assuming wind and conditions do not hinder it.

NOTE: For a complete description of ships, cost, and other details refer to **Chapter 3 Equipment**.

CANOE TRAVEL

The birchbark canoe is an efficient means of transportation up and down rivers. Light and flexible, the canoe carries up to six man-sized passengers and 2000 lbs. of materials. At a rate of 40 strokes per minute with a full complement of rowers on calm or gentle rivers, the canoe could easily make 40 miles in an 8-hour day or 60 miles in a 12-hour day. The canoe moves roughly 10 ft. per round plus 1 ft. per point of strength bonus per rower. Rowers cannot physically row beyond 12 hours without being sapped of energy, suffering -2 to strength and constitution until they have had 12 straight hours of uninterrupted rest.

FIGHTING FROM A CANOE: Shooting or hurling missile weapons from a canoe forces an automatic -2 penalty to the attack roll, in addition to any other applicable penalties, due to the boat's rocking upon the water.

Melee combat requires the fighter first make a successful dexterity check or fall in the water. The dexterity check is at CL 2, modified by strong or rough currents. Strong currents add an additional +2, and rough currents, such as white water, add an additional +4 to the challenge level. If the combatant makes a successful dexterity attribute check, he may attack normally but suffers a -2 to his attack roll. If he fails, he drops anything held and falls into the water; swimming rules then apply. An attacker failing his dexterity check with a roll of natural 1 tips the canoe, its contents, and any additional occupants!

A canoe's riders suffer a -2 to dexterity-based magical saves, as they have nowhere else to move to except out of the canoe. If the rider decides to leave the canoe, he may instead make an unpenalized dexterity-based save, but he will then be in the water and under the effects of the swimming rules.

Sitting in the canoe provides a +2 cover bonus to Armor Class.

PORTAGING: When rivers become exceptionally rough or when travelling past waterfalls and the like, the canoe must be dismounted and carried. The canoe can be portaged by four man-sized humanoids. A portage typically takes an hour due to unpacking and repacking the canoe plus travelling the distance the canoe must be carried. The time of a portage could be longer or shorter, depending on the distance the canoe must be carried in order to move it to safer waters.

SWIMMING MOVEMENT

Swimming requires knowledge of how to move in the water. For example, desert dwellers may not have encountered vast bodies of water. It also requires a successful strength check. Aquatic creatures treat all strength checks for swimming as a primary ability score, receive a +10 bonus to all checks, and need only make checks in strong or rushing currents (at the CK's discretion, aquatic creatures may do away with all strength checks for swimming). The following challenge levels are meant to serve as examples, but they may be adjusted to reflect the unique difficulties of the Castle Keeper's adventure. Swimming is impossible in armor heavier than leather.

TABLE 8.3 SWIMMING

SWIMMING	CALM WATER	MODERATE CURRENT	STRONG CURRENT	RUSHING CURRENT
CHALLENGE LEVEL	(CL 2)	(CL 6)	(CL 8)	(CL 10)

A successful strength check is required to move at half speed through the water, whether on the surface or beneath it. At the CK's discretion, a bonus to movement might be provided for a particularly high success or when a character is swimming with, rather than against, the current. Failure by 4 or less indicates the character flounders and cannot move that round. Characters failing by 5 or more are pulled beneath the surface, or, if already swimming underwater, are dragged in a different direction by the current.

Characters failing their strength check when attempting to swim in strong or rushing water are tossed by the current at a rate of 40 ft. per round and must make a successful dexterity check (CL 8) to grab hold of anything available. If there is no object to grab hold of, they may attempt to make another swim check with +2 added to the challenge level in order to correct themselves and begin swimming with the current.

Without taking steps to create or maintain buoyancy, characters with moderate or greater encumbrance sink to the bottom and may choose to walk along the bottom at half speed. This forces them to travel around any hazards existing along the bottom, such as hills, ravines, coral reefs, holes, or other hazards. Moving water can throw characters off balance, and a successful strength check is required to walk across the bottom when there is a strong (CL 4) or rushing (CL 6) current. A failure of this check causes the character to be swept away as above.

DROWNING

Characters can hold their breath for a number of rounds equal to their total constitution score. Each additional round requires a successful constitution check that begins at CL 0 and increases by +1 each additional round. If a character fails a constitution check before finding breathable air, he begins to drown, and is reduced to –7 hit points, losing one hit point per round thereafter until he dies. Taking several rounds to finally drown provides nearby allies the opportunity to save a drowning character and, ideally, provides a great deal of tension

and excitement as they attempt to do so. The CK should note that while these drowning rules are designed to be applied to air-breathing creatures underwater, they can also be used as "suffocating" rules for aquatic, non-air-breathing creatures that venture out of the water.

Generally, characters who know they will be underwater for a fair amount of time will prepare with magic or magical effects allowing them to breathe underwater. The Castle Keeper should keep track of the duration of these magical effects and apply the above rules when that magic ceases to function.

Ship Damage

Bad or severe storms or combat can cause extreme damage to ships. Severely damaged ships must be brought inland for repairs, unless all supplies for repairing them and experienced hands are onboard. Cross-reference the conditions to determine the possible damage. All checks are made with a challenge base of 18, unless there is an experienced deckhand or captain able to take charge of the ship; under those circumstances, the CB is 12. If there is an experienced captain or deckhand in charge, he adds his highest primary attribute bonus to the check. Every hour a storm rages, the Castle Keeper should check for damage effects; on a failed check, roll a d6 and consult **Table 8.4 Damage to Ships**.

TABLE 8.4 DAMAGE TO SHIPS

Damages (D6)	Bad	Severe	Hurricane
1 Mangled Rigging/Sail	CL 6	CL 8	CL 14
2 Mast Breaks	CL 2	CL 6	CL 12
3 Hull Damaged	CL 2	CL 4	CL 8
4 Capsized	CL 3	CL 5	CL 7
5 Ship Sinks	CL 1	CL 3	CL 5
6 Lost Crewman	CL 2	CL 5	CL 10

Becoming Lost

It is far easier to become lost at sea than on land, especially if there is no experienced navigator onboard the ship. Weather conditions play havoc with direction and location. If there is no navigator, roll once a day on **Table 8.5 Getting Lost** to determine the required CL for the ship to stay on course based on the weather conditions. If there is an experienced navigator, checks only need to be made in severe or moderate weather; the navigator adds his level and wisdom bonus to the check.

TABLE 8.5 GETTING LOST

Weather	
None	CL 4
Bad	CL 8
Moderate	CL 12
Severe	CL 20

If the ship becomes lost, it moves 5d4 degrees off course for that day. To determine the direction in which it veers, roll a d8 and consult **Table 8.6 Directions**.

TABLE 8.6 DIRECTIONS

1	North
2	North West
3	West
4	South West
5	South
6	South East
7	East
8	North East

ADVENTURES UNDERWATER

Whether it is searching for sunken treasure, exploring underwater ruins, or delving beneath the waters inside a dungeon or cave, underwater adventures pose unique challenges to both the PCs and the CK. This section looks at visibility, ranged and melee combat, and spellcasting; Underwater movement and drowning rules are covered earlier in the.chapter. As with all options presented in the Castle Keeper's Guide, these rules are subject to your own interpretations and adjustments to help maintain the smooth flow of your campaign.

Visibility

While movement and the demand for air are challenges beneath the waves, a further challenge is the limited ability to see surrounding dangers. Modeling true visibility in deep water would be difficult and require numerous variables and tables. Add in seaweed or schools of moving fish, and it could be made even more complicated. **C&C** is designed to be a swift game with most variables left to the CK to boil down to simple bonuses or penalties. Weeds, coral reefs, and even schools of fish can provide potential cover bonuses at the CK's discretion.

Non-magical fire obviously doesn't burn underwater, so any light sources the characters might use will be magical in nature. Although magical light might provide the same illumination underwater, the moving nature of the water and its ability to bend light rays reduce range of sight to half of normal. Murky, muddy water limits range of sight to 10 ft., even with a magical light source. The Castle Keeper can determine if the water is particularly clear and allows a greater range of sight.

During daylight hours, sunshine can reach down as far as 100 ft. in clear water and provide an accurate range of sight out to 50 ft. Beyond 50 ft., moving shapes can be seen, but exact features are indistinct. Aquatic creatures can see much farther than surface dwellers. The lens in the eye does not dilate, but rather adjusts by going in and out, allowing them to see in dim light. Generally aquatic creatures have poor distance vision but excellent up close vision, able to see 200 yards at minimum, with some species able to see up to a thousand yards.

Ranged Combat

Ranged weapons fired underwater are completely ineffective unless specially designed as underwater weapons, such as those wielded by aquatic beings. Thrown weapons are completely ineffective underwater, whether they are made by creatures living beneath the waves or above them. Firing missiles into the water from above is also very difficult. First, missiles fired from above are significantly slowed by the water and can't harm anything more than 10 feet beneath the surface. Second, such missiles only do half damage when they do strike. Finally, the water bends light, making it difficult to truly determine where the target is, providing a significant –6 penalty to all ranged attacks fired from above into the water.

Melee Combat

In an effort to keep things simple, all melee attack rolls by non-aquatic/amphibious beings made underwater simply suffer a -2 penalty and deal only half damage due to water resistance. This can be eliminated by the use of some magical effects (see below). Aquatic creatures suffer no penalties underwater. Characters with *freedom of movement* or similar magic or magical effects act normally underwater and suffer no penalties to their attack or damage rolls.

Magic and Spellcasting

Any spells requiring a verbal component are impossible to cast while underwater unless the caster is under the effects of a *water breathing* spell or some form of air bubble surrounds the caster's head, allowing him to speak and pronounce the words normally. Likewise, magical items requiring a verbal spell trigger are similarly impossible to activate while underwater unless the caster meets the above conditions.

While it is clear that normal fires do not function underwater, magical fire effects are also ineffective beneath the waves unless the description of the spell, creature, or magic item creating them specifically states otherwise. Fire-based spells cast by clerics or other divine spellcasters succeed if the fire is described as "divine." Rather than a column or blast of fire, though, the spell creates super-heated steam with the same damage effect. A number of other magic spells simply fail underwater, while others have profoundly different effects as described below. Spells that never work are presented in a Castle Keeper's Quick Guide at the end of this section. As always, these changes to spells are merely suggestions; the Castle Keeper should feel free to modify or eliminate any of these suggestions.

Freedom of Movement: this spell is listed first, as it allows all creatures to attack and move normally through the water. Characters under a *freedom of movement* spell, or using a magical item or potion that provides a similar effect, suffer no penalties to attack or damage rolls when making melee attacks. Ranged attacks are not affected because the water still affects the fired missiles. It should also be noted that this spell does not provide the ability to breathe underwater.

Water Breathing: this spell and similar spell effects allow characters to breathe underwater for a limited duration. The CK should consider allowing the opposite spell, *air breathing*, to purely aquatic creatures that cannot otherwise survive out of the water.

Air/Water Walk: subjects of this spell automatically float straight up to the surface at an uncontrolled 60 ft. per round.

Animal Shapes: only an animal shape capable of surviving underwater can be used.

*Cone of Cold:*the area for this spell is reduced to 5 ft by 25 ft. long, as it turns a large area of water into ice. The spell deals only 1d4 points of damage per caster level (no save for the damage), but it forces a dexterity save to avoid being encased in ice. Medium targets or smaller that are encased in ice float immediately to the surface and are frozen as in a *hold person* spell. They remain there until the ice melts or they are freed. The ice is magical and does not suffocate them in any way.

Create Water, Create Food and Water: these spells can be reversed and used to destroy water around an underwater creature. The water rushing to take the place of the destroyed water buffets the creature, dealing 1d4 points of damage.

Earthquake, Move Earth: these spells function on the ground beneath the water and can create powerful, damaging waves at the Castle Keeper's option.

Flame Strike: half this spell's damage is considered holy damage and is not subject to save. For the other half, instead of a column of fire, it creates a column of super-heated steam that deals normal damage, half if there is a successful save.

Fly: the *fly* spell allows the target to move through the water as if he were flying through the air, but he can only move at half the normal movement rate provided by the spell.

Heat/Chill Metal: the *heat metal* version of this spell does not work underwater, but *chill metal* does.

Ice Storm: the hail version of this spell can do half damage to creatures within 5 ft. of the surface, or normal damage to those swimming on the surface.

Invisibility (all types): Invisible, air-breathing creatures leave a detectable bubble trail. Invisible amphibians and aquatic creatures still displace water, thus allowing opponents actively looking for them to gain a wisdom check with a CL equal to the spellcaster's level. If the *invisibility* is granted by a magical item, the CL is equal to the lowest caster level required to cast the *invisibility* spell (CL 4).

Levitate: a character levitating underwater can control his ascent and decent through the water, but currents still move him about.

Lightning Bolt, Chain Lightning: these spells send out a 25ft.-radius burst of electrical energy centered on the caster and deal damage to the caster as well as all those around him.

Shocking Grasp: this spell deals 1d8+1 points of damage to both the target and the caster.

Sound Burst: the water makes the sound more damaging, inflicting 3d6 points of damage to those in its area of effect. Unfortunately, the caster takes 3 points of damage himself when casting it.

Summoning Spells (all): only creatures able to survive underwater can be summoned underwater.

Summoning Spells (elementals): fire and air elementals cannot be summoned underwater. Earth elementals can be summoned, but they must remain in touch with the ground at the bottom of the body of water they are summoned in.

Wall of Ice: the created *wall of ice* instantly begins to float to the surface as a plane of ice.

Castle Keeper's Quick Guide

SPELLS THAT NEVER WORK UNDERWATER

Acid Arrow	Incendiary Cloud
Cloudkill	Insect Plague
Continual Flame	Meteor Swarm
Control Winds	Pyrotechnics
Creeping Doom	Rope Trick
Dancing Lights	Secure Shelter
Delayed Blast Fireball	Sleet Storm
Faithful Hound	Solid Fog
Feather Fall	Stinking Cloud
Fireball	Storm of Vengeance
Fire Seeds	Sunburst
Fireshield	Tiny Hut
Fire Storm	Wall of Fire
Fire Trap	Wall of Thorns
Floating Disk	Wall of Wind
Fog Cloud	Web
Gaseous Form	Whirlwind
Gust of Wind	Wind Walk

ADVENTURES IN THE AIR

Much as with waterborne adventures, aerial adventures add a new dimension of play to role-playing games. The adventure takes place in a multi-dimensional environment where there is an "above" and a "beneath." Aerial adventures have limited scope, as there are few treasures hidden in the air where they aren't easily detected, and the monsters here are limited to those with natural or magical flying abilities. Characters who venture in the aerial environs must possess some method of flying, or else the character cannot venture into the sky.

In the air, the area of effect of a spell is not restricted by ground or terrain. Line of sight extends as far as the eye can see, limited only by the eye itself and the amount of light present. Movement is restricted to the manner of propulsion. Even with these limitations, aerial adventures open up a wide vista of possibilities for the Castle Keeper to explore, and they allow for the creation of a whole new set of adventuring parameters, finally taking full advantage of flying monsters and magic that suffer few advantages for their evolutionary adaptations when stuck in the terrestrial world.

SETTING

Several types of aerial adventures exist, but atmospheric and the extra-planar adventures prove the most common. These types of adventures act in similar ways: creatures move up and down, left and right, and they dwell in regions where sight is possible in all directions. The only particular differences between the two are the comforts necessary for survival: breathing, eating, drinking, etc. For instance, on some planes, the PCs may not be able to breathe the air or find edible food. Adventuring here is not restricted to some craft, but is restricted to those who have the ability to move through the environment. This almost always means by some magical means or upon the backs of some type of flying steed.

Atmospheric: These adventures take place in the air above some world, which need not be a terrestrial planet; it can be a gas giant, for instance. In any case, those occupying the space must eat, sleep, drink, etc. Adventurers propel themselves, or find themselves propelled, into the air where they fly and encounter flying creatures. Flight is the common denominator in all encounters and adventures. Those who can't fly can't exist in the environment. These adventures tend to be short, fun escapes into the air, where the characters overcome certain objectives, much as a dungeon, or treasure hunt.

Extra-Planar: Beyond the scope of the physical lie the magical planes: the elemental plane of air, the ethereal plane, and the astral plane, to name but a few. These planes require their own parameters for survival, and differences of perception exist from plane to plane. These adventures act in the same manner as atmospheric, but usually involve other mitigating circumstances, such as extreme heat, extreme cold, etc. These conditions should be applied by the CK in whatever degree is deemed necessary.

Visibility

Little restricts visibility in the air. Technically, the human eye can see light millions of light years away, so long as that line of sight remains free from objects or obstructions. However, the light one sees does not necessarily allow the brain to deduce the object's actual shape. The eye focuses the light, and through rods and cones, signals the brain through nerve endings,

allowing the brain to deduce the object. The eye itself can only interpret so much, and distance does play a part. On Earth, the curvature of the visual sphere restricts our practical vision in daylight, limiting it to about 16 miles, allowing us to interpret what we see. The nature of the eye does not change in role-playing games; for all practical purposes, visibility is restricted to about 16 miles.

Cloud formations restrict this visibility considerably, especially if the adventurer is passing through a bank of cloud, storm or otherwise. If the clouds are heavy storm clouds, visibility is at nighttime levels, meaning only those creatures with Darkvision can see normally. If the party encounters normal clouds treat the visibility as the same conditions that exist at Dusk and only Dark and Duskvision works.

Ranged Combat

Ranged combat works exactly as it does in terrestrial environments. Use the Aerial Combat Rating (ACR) rules below, if desired.

Melee Combat

Air battles are like no other. In normal terrain, combatants fly over two-dimensional spaces. The plane is flat, even if interrupted by topographical features, meaning the combatants look upon their plane and above them only. But in the air, combatants must worry about what is above them, what is on the aerial plane before them, and what lies beneath them. Movement is extremely fast and unimpeded by anything other than the opponent and any air resistance. Storms may loom, but their interruption is temporary, at best, and the flyers break free from their grasp as quickly as they enter them. This freedom laces airborne battle with tremendous potential. The physical terrain does not dominate the area of operations, but rather frees the combatants from worries over anything other than their opponent. A character's ability to move and react is paramount, making dexterity the all-important attribute.

Aerial Combat Made Easy

In an effort to keep the rules simple, a creature whose movement rate is twice as fast as its opponent's movement rate gains a +2 bonus to the initiative roll. All melee attack rolls by non-aerial beings suffer a -4 penalty. A terrestrial creature assuming the form of an aerial creature only suffers a -2 penalty instead of -4. This is because while they have gained the ability to fly they do not have the experience. Damage remains the same. Aerial creatures suffer no penalties in aerial combat.

AERIAL COMBAT WITH MANEUVERS

For the venturesome, **Castles & Crusades** assigns monsters an Aerial Combat Rating (ACR). The ACR is a combination of the creature's speed and maneuverability. The ACR serves as a bonus to the creature's dexterity when conducting aerial combat maneuvers. All airborne maneuvers and most actions the creature takes require a dexterity check. The faster and more maneuverable the creature, the higher the ACR and the better at aerial combat and maneuvers the creature is.

To determine a creature's ACR, consult **Table 8.7 Speed Rating** and **Table 8.8. Maneuver Rating**. The creature's fly movement is fixed, giving the creature a movement score. Add this number to the Maneuver Score. The Maneuver Score is cumulative. For instance, a creature can be slow but agile, giving it a score of 5 (+5 for being an aerial creature, -1 for being slow, and +1 for being agile=6).

TABLE 8.7 SPEED RATING

Fly Movement Rate	Score
10-50	+1
51-100	+2
101-150	+3
151+200	+4
201+	+5

TABLE 8.8 MANEUVER RATING

Maneuverability	Score
Non-Aerial	-2
Encumbered	-2
Cumbersome	-1
Slow	-1
Average	0
Agile	+1
Magic Flight	+1
360° Vision/Senses	+2
Wings	+2
Very Agile	+3
Aerial*	+5

*Air elementals, genies, etc.

Aerial Combat Rating Made Easy

The combat round proceeds as normal. Each combatant rolls initiative, with the highest roll reacting first; creatures whose movement rate is double their opponents' gain a +2 on initiative rolls. The combatants battle, adding their ACR to their armor class, to-hit rolls, and to any attribute checks they make. This counts for both defender and attacker. The faster the creature and the more maneuverable, the better chance it has to score a successful strike or to avoid a blow. The ACR stacks with abilities, such as air mastery.

The combat, however, should not be a simple recitation of "'he hits" or "she misses." Aerial combat is exciting, as it is battle in a pure form, with no impediments. The skill of the combatants, their dexterity and experience, combine to make this combat a testament to their abilities, whether monster or character. Actively incorporating the maneuvers listed below, or any number of aerial maneuvers not listed, enhances the experience.

Aerial Combat with Maneuvers

If the combatants are attacking each other head on, with no aerial maneuvers, they add their ACR to their attack rolls, armor

class, and ability checks, with combat proceeding normally. However, intelligent, or even experienced, natural flyers almost always use combat maneuvers to gain attacks free from harm.

Aerial combat maneuvers in **C&C** are very similar to the aerial battles conducted by airplanes in the Great Wars of the modern era. Pilots learned to maneuver their aircraft in various tactical maneuvers, allowing them to gain advantages upon their less-skilled opponents, or conversely to escape them. Through a series of turns, loops, dives, and climbs, they wove their machines through a network of aircraft, bullets, and missiles. The best survived their first contests through their speed and instincts, and experience soon made them almost unbeatable. They used speed, maneuverability, and their ability to climb and to orchestrate combat maneuvers, outwitting or destroying their enemy. Any dragon with a lifetime's worth of flying under wing would obviously possess similar skills. The dragon would know its abilities in the air, just as the World War I fighter ace did.

As before, creatures whose movement rate is double their opponents' gain a +2 on initiative rolls. In the case of aerial maneuvers, the creature's AC remains the same. Its ACR serves as a combat bonus: it adds that bonus to its attack, AC, and any ability checks. Furthermore, a creature's ACR adds to the creature's hit dice to serve as the challenge level that any attacking creature must overcome to successfully conduct a combat maneuver. The combatant with initiative announces his attack, with his opponent able to attempt a defensive combat maneuver. He must announce the defensive maneuver and make a successful dexterity check to successfully pull off the maneuver.

In order for the defender/attacker to successfully make a combat maneuver they must make a successful dexterity save against the CL listed below. Failure means the attack proceeds; success means the defender can attack first or attempt to flee using the chosen maneuver.

TABLE 8.9 COMBAT MANEUVERS

Action	CL	Result	Description
Barrel Roll	4	A	Complete roll, slows combatant, placing him behind/above opponent.
Immelman	10	A	Pass on attack, climb, roll and pass again for second attack that round.
Hover	2	A	Allows controlled attack, gain +2.
Cobra Turn	8	D/A	If pursued on plane, slow up to vertical, drop behind/above and attack.
Aileron Roll	2	D	Roll on access, confuses enemy and gains (doubles) speed after 2 rnds.
Climb	2	D	Vertical Climb to escape opponent.
Tailslide	6	D	Flyer ascends vertical, stops, drops, until level and moves again.
Scissor	6	D	Allows flyer to maintain speed and plane with enemy.
Split S	8	D	Inverted roll, completely changing direction, on lower plane.

Example: A gargoyle and a cockatrice battle in the air. The gargoyle's ACR is 4 (from **Creature ACR** below), giving him an AC of 20 and a +9 to the attack (5HD + 4 ACR); dexterity is a prime for the gargoyle, giving him a CB of 12+9 for HD and ACR; its Challenge Level is 9 (5HD + 4 ACR). The cockatrice's is 7, giving him an AC of 21 and a +12 to the attack (5HD + 7 ACR); dexterity is a prime for the cockatrice, giving him a CB of 12+12 for HD and ACR; its challenge level is 12 (5HD +4 ACR). Both creatures are aerial creatures and gain no bonus to initiative.

First Round: The gargoyle wins initiative on the first round, and attacks the cockatrice head on. The cockatrice desires to avoid the head-on attack, but it does not want the gargoyle attacking from behind it, so it attempts a split S. He rolls a dexterity check, achieving a natural 20. The move allows him to avoid the attack, change direction, drop down below the gargoyle, and then flee. The gargoyle cannot attack that round, but he continues the pursuit, swooping down behind the cockatrice.

Second Round: On the following round, the cockatrice wins initiative. He announces a barrel roll attack. The gargoyle's ACR/CL is 9, so the cockatrice must beat 21 (CB 12 + CL 9 =21). He rolls a 19+7 ACR, giving him a 26. He succeeds, launching an attack on the gargoyle. The gargoyle takes a defensive maneuver and attempts a vertical climb to escape the cockatrice. The cockatrice's ACR/CL is 12, so the gargoyle must beat a 24 (CB 12 + CL 12 = 24). He rolls a 5+12 ACR, giving him a 17. He fails to take the defensive maneuver, and the cockatrice attacks. The cockatrice rolls a 13 and adds + 12, for a total of 25, which strikes at the gargoyle's AC of 20. The gargoyle must save against petrifaction; he rolls a 4 + 5 (for its HD) results in a 9. The target number being 23, the gargoyle is transformed to stone and plummets to the earth to crash in a heap of rubble.

Below is a list of creatures that appear in the **Monsters & Treasure** book. They have been rated with their ACR. These numbers are based upon our interpretations of the creatures; individual CKs should adjust them as they see fit for their games. Furthermore, they should serve as a basis for determining the ACRs of creatures not listed.

TABLE 8.10 CREATURE ACR

Creature	ACR
Arrowhawk	8
Banshee	2
Barghest	1
Belker	3
Bird of Prey	8
Chimera	4
Cloaker	-1
Cockatrice	8
Couatl	7
Darkmantle	-1
Dragon*	
Black	8
Blue	8
Green	9
Red	9
White	10
Brass	10
Bronze	8
Copper	8
Gold	7
Silver	9
Dragonne	1
Eagle	8
Elemental, Air	13
Gargoyle	4
Genie, Djinn, Efreet	11
Griffon	7
Harpy	2
Hippogriff	7
Homunculus	2
Imp	5
Invisible Stalker	5
Jaculus	6
Lammasu	3
Manticore	2
Nightmare	5
Pegasus	9
Prysmal Eye	4
Pseudodragon	7
Quasit	5
Raven	8
Roc	6
Shadow	5
Sphinx	
Andro	4
Crio	5
Gynos	5
Hieraco	4
Sprite, Pixie	6
Stirge	7
Vampire	8
Will-o'-Wisp	4
Wraith	3
Wyvern	4
Yeth Hound	2
Yrthak	6

* Dragons in the young (1-3) category get a -1 to their ACR and dragons in old (10-12) category gain a +1.

MAGIC AND SPELLCASTING

Magic is unaffected by the aerial environment. Aerial magical attacks are handled normally. Magic does work differently on certain planes, as each has its own parameters.

CHAPTER 9 – EQUIPMENT WASTAGE

As noted in previous chapters, equipment plays a major role in **Castles & Crusades**. It is a renewable resource that CKs can use to augment battles, to role-play gained experience, to drain party treasures, and to motivate the adventurers to embark upon further adventures. Equipment defines many aspects of the game, and as such, deserves more than just passing attention and brief descriptions. Once altered, the pricing guides set down in the **Players Handbook** can impart a whole set of imagery about a certain area or even an NPC. Using equipment to augment battles is obvious, but the forced wastage of the gear, weapons, armor, and normal equipment can often be as painful as watching hit points bleed away. In short, expanding the use of equipment enhances the game; paying attention to pricing, wastage, and even special gear are all tools in the CK's toolbox.

Because players often associate their character's equipment with their character's identity and the way they perceive that identity and project it, the equipment itself can assume an exaggerated role in the game. Characters rarely discard anything, but constantly accumulate treasures. It mimics the hoarding instinct; gather as much as you can in times of plenty to safeguard for times of scarcity. Of course, this can reach ridiculous proportions as far as player characters are concerned. Much of the gear they accumulate is heavy and bulky and would wear anyone down after even a few short marches. Magic items compound this, and as these virtually indestructible items accumulate, players are very reluctant to let them go under any circumstances, contrived or otherwise.

Unless the characters have a lair, a home base, castle, dungeon, tower, or other domicile within which to store their gear, the CK should keep some note of the amount accumulated. Reducing these lists of items is up to the CK. Using the below wastage and weathering rules offer a perfect approach to this problem, as does increasing the cost of items characters attempt to buy.

Take note to not overdo it. The tyranny of rules surfaces here like in all other RPG realms. It becomes very easy for CKs to fall into the habit of forcing saving throws on every item at every possible junction, or worse, constantly reshaping a character's image through habitually destroying his items and gear. Use the wastage and weathering rules sparingly, as with all things, moderation usually suffices.

COST OF GOODS

The Castle Keeper may find it necessary or convenient to adjust the cost of certain items by their availability. In general, all items are relatively common, and they are not subject to price differences: a hammer is a hammer, after all. However, there are several reasons why the cost of items may need adjusting.

The foremost reason is that the setting itself, or the region where the adventure is taking place, actually calls for it. For instance, as noted above, iron is available in a Bronze-Age

setting; it is just rare, and items made of iron may be subject to a cost increase.

Also, the CK may find it convenient to use the adventure to relieve the party of its treasure. He may need to do this to encourage the party members to seek further adventure, or because the characters' wealth has gotten a little out of control. Commonly, the CK employs an encounter with a rogue to perform this relief, but a far more insidious and less reactive approach is through the characters' needs. The characters have to buy equipment, food, and the like. Jacking up prices by a few gold saps their belt pouches of its excess coin quite quickly.

Example: Koetel, the cleric, is looking for a silver holy symbol. The town is too small to have a temple to his deity, so he sets off to a smithy to have one made under his direction. The smith is more than willing to undertake the charge, but he tells the character that raw silver is scarce in town, as the trade roads have been hounded by orc bandits these past two years. He can get some, but Koetel should expect a slightly inflated price for his item. Koetel agrees to pay the extra amount. The normal cost for a silver holy symbol is 25gp, so the base cost for Koetel is 27gp and 5sp, a 10% jump in price. This, of course, doesn't include any other fees the smith may charge for constructing the item (**see Chapter 4 NPCs and Hirelings**).

It is entirely up to the CK if he wishes to make items abundant, common, or rare. Following a simple 10% rule is the best; the

addition/subtraction is easy to do and easy to control. Anything beyond that simply complicates the approach and makes more work and less fun for everyone.

Use the following table to determine cost adjustments.

TABLE 9.1 COST VS. AVAILABILITY

Availability	Cost Adjustment
Abundant	-10%
Common	N/A
Rare	+10%

ROLE-PLAYING EQUIPMENT

There is no fun in allowing the player characters to go into a city and buy equipment at the prices listed in the **Castles & Crusades** *Player's Handbook*. Make them work for their goods. There are lots of factors determining the cost of equipment. Remember, in C&C, it's all about the role-playing, and everything in the game has the potential for a great deal of fun. Use some of these scenarios to increase the pleasure of your game.

The trick is to use the need or desire for equipment as the source of action and fun. Below are some sample encounters for new adventures involving the characters' need for equipment.

THE ONLY GAME IN TOWN: Arnold the armorer is the only metal smith within a hundred miles. Normally, he shoes horses, but in his spare time, he likes to make pieces of armor and well-crafted shields. Currently, he has several full suits of chain mail, and he has several large steel shields of which he's extremely proud. He's asking triple the book value for these things, and if the characters don't like the price, they can look elsewhere.

HE DOESN'T LIKE YOUR LOOKS: Dirk Bardon is a retired army weapon smith and is the only weapon smith in the town and the surrounding area. He likes working on all sorts of weapons, but specializes in war hammers and has many of them in his weapon shop. When the player characters come in, he sees them as trouble. He whistles up his four apprentices, and they come running in with throwing hammers in their hands. No matter how nice the characters treat him, he's going to charge them double the normal rate for his unusually well-made equipment.

HE HAS A PROBLEM ONLY YOU CAN SOLVE: Danwise Bowson is an expert bowyer who is an elf living at the edge of a small village. Due to their exquisite craftsmanship, his bows and crossbows have a +1 bonus on to hit rolls, while his arrows and bolts have a +1 bonus to damage. His prices are double normal prices, but he asks a favor and will give bows in return. Human slavers took his niece last week. Danwise would have gone after them, but elves aren't appreciated in human lands. If the group finds his niece and brings her back, they can keep the bows and arrows and he'll resupply their arrows at least once more thereafter.

THE AREA IS IN THE MIDDLE OF A WAR: The city has been battling a huge orc fort located on a cliff face a dozen miles away. The city is bristling with military types, and there isn't an unowned suit of armor or military weapon available. There is a brisk trade in orc weapons and armor for human-sized weapons and armor, however, should anyone be brave enough to scavenge the battle site.

HE'S WORKING FOR THE BARON RIGHT NOW: The local baron rules the land in a wide area around the town. He lives in a castle high on a hill above the town. Currently, he's preparing for a war with the baron in the next county, and he's demanding all of the smiths' time to make his armor and weapons. It might be worth the player characters' time to sign up for the war. They stand a good chance of getting equipment for free as long as they fight for the baron.

A SISTER'S RESCUE: Everyone in the city of Petersboro agrees the armorer Ganson is the best in the entire region. The player characters want to upgrade their equipment, as they have just scored a rich haul of gems and gold. They meet Ganson and ask how much a steel breastplate would cost, knowing it should be about 300 gold. Ganson asks for 900. A give and take about the price reveals that Ganson has a missing sister. If the group agrees to find her, Ganson will give all the fighters a full chain suit with a breastplate of steel. The characters agree to the new quest and the adventure is afoot!

EQUIPMENT WASTAGE

Adventuring is hard work. It involves travel on long, ill-repaired roads, deep forest trails, and almost invisible tracks through the open wilderness. It involves clambering over mountains, running down dark alleys, and crawling through dungeons. The adventurers must brave a variety of weather from the extreme scorching heat of the desert to the frozen tundra. Wind, rain, snow, and sleet all batter and pummel the wandering adventurer in his quest for gold and glory. But more, adventuring involves hard battles with often large and nasty creatures that pick up the adventurers and toss them about, or at the very least, hack and chop at them with cleavers, swords, axes, halberds, and all manner of weaponry, including their claws. The physical part of running, jumping, falling down, being pummeled with huge iron-studded maces and the like causes extraordinary damage to equipment. Wastage is that slow grinding down of something, which, in this case, is the adventurers' equipment.

For CKs seeking this level of detail in their game, equipment wastage, how fast it wears down and needs replacing, begets a whole new level of fun. Furthermore, wastage offers the Castle Keeper an invaluable resource. Wastage, if used properly, offers the CK a plethora of opportunities to advance the game, to create plot points and turns, to establish a mood, to capture players' emotions, and to bring the entire game to a head without disrupting the flow of play.

Games often stymie as players become dismayed or unsure of which direction to take, or what they are supposed to be doing.

When this happens, it is incumbent upon the CK to propel the game forward by shifting the players' focus away from the task at hand. This forces them into new circumstances, which the CK can use to bring more information to bare, revealing plot points and the like. There are several approaches to this problem.

The heavy-handed approach is to force them through simple explanations, pointing them in the correct direction. But this often shatters the suspension of disbelief the CK may have established, and also frustrates players that may not want to be handheld in any direction. A more generalized approach is to force them into battle with a wandering monster. Though this certainly has its value, bringing a party to its senses through a melee, it can lead to unwanted circumstances, such as causing a character's death, or even knocking one character into the negative hit points, which can cause major problems with a game's flow. This pause forces the characters' attention on the unsolved problem without offering any avenues of approach, and killing a character causes all manner of unforeseen problems.

This is where equipment plays a vital role for the CK. Normal wastage on equipment constitutes the act of normal wear and tear on a character's gear. Weather wastage is the damage extreme conditions may cause the gear. Combat wastage is the damage inflicted upon gear by the tremendous number of cleaving, crushing, chopping weapons used in the various battles the adventuring character is involved in. By utilizing the wastage rules below, the CK uses the character's equipment as a CK tool, and he forces the game onward without undue problems for the party—other than the simple need to find a store to replace broken-down equipment.

Example 1: The party arrived at Green Lonesome, a community of Halflings in the southern Darkenfold, over a week ago. Their intent to hire an NPC cleric failed, as problems developed with the local halfling temple. The characters cannot decide which direction to go or whether or not to push on with the adventure in the forest. The Castle Keeper needs them to move further west toward to the town of End's Meet, where the Wizard's Tower lies. This lull serves a good time for the CK to do an equipment check to determine what kind of wastage the party has suffered; the CK is then able to take control of the situation. "*You find that the constant rain and watery conditions of this part of the forest have taken a terrible toll on your equipment. Much of it is worn down and in need of replacing, particularly the edges on swords, arrows, axes, and your other weapons. There is no iron smith worth a salt in Green Lonesome, so you are informed that to properly equip and repair your characters, you must go to the town of End's Meet.*" The CK has effectively created an excuse for the party to move forward and has forced them to do so without seeming to railroad them to the adventure.

Example 2: The CK has come to the realization that the characters are well equipped and have plenty of coin. The evening's play calls for a local sheriff to hire the party to do a certain job. The job leads to the wizard's tower, and the tower is where the adventure lies. But the usual player bickering over whether or not to take such a job is going to be an impediment. Angrod's player has the least motivation to go on the adventure, as he has hoarded his coin and has good equipment. The CK draws up a quick encounter with orcs. In the ensuing battle, he takes the reigns of the game firmly in hand.

Armed with a chain hauberk, breast plate, great helm, and shield, Angrod attacks the encountered orcs. He wields a battle axe. He fearlessly lays into the assailing orcs, hacking one down and driving the other off with his shield. But as he does so, the CK allows for a third orc to leap past his guard and drive a spear between the front and back of the dwarf's breast plate. Though the blow misses any flesh, it cuts through the hauberk and drives into the inside of the breast plate. The force of the blow breaks the straps of leather holding the two halves of the breast plate together. This forces the dwarf to shed his breastplate, as it is now useless. A few rounds later, his helmet is crushed down over his eyes, and he is forced to toss the misshapen helm aside, as well. Another blow bends his shield, so that it, too, is useless. Although Angrod has taken little damage by the battle's end, his equipment is horribly damaged and in need of replacement, or at the very least, repair.

In this example, the CK caused enough damage to Angrod's gear to force him to spend money, one way or another. It will probably be enough to tap out the dwarf, putting the need for a job to earn more coin firmly in his mind. The CK has quietly used the character's own equipment to further both the story and the adventure. The character is really no worse for the wear, having just earned one more battle scar to add as proof of his heroic deeds.

ROLE PLAYING WASTAGE

Normal Wastage

Equipment simply wears out over time. Whether it's backpack straps, shoe soles, or the too-often-used rope, equipment suffers from normal wear and tear. It's not easy to track this, and the CK should not make any attempt to seriously do so over extended periods of time. Such an endeavor would require too much effort and yield very little fun for the CK or player. Checking once every few games or when the campaign stalls and needs a simple push to get it started again works very well.

The easiest way to show usage is to put the responsibility on the player. You can do this through imaginative role-playing. The Castle Keeper needs only to take any mundane action and use it to put the idea of usage in the player's head.

EXAMPLE: "Angrod, you move up through the small crevice, pulling yourself up through the opening. The rocks are jagged, notched over the centuries from the moisture found in the cave. As you pull yourself through the aperture, the iron ring of your axe scabbard catches on a rock, and before you know it, you've torn the belt holding it. Though the belt is intact, it has developed quite a tear in the leather. How long the belt will last is anybody's guess."

The player will remember this tidbit, as the torn, droopy belt probably does not fit his image of the character, and so he will endeavor to replace the belt at the nearest opportunity. Role-playing usage is easy to do as it comes in the normal course of play, with any and all equipment being subject to it. Furthermore, it enhances the descriptions of the adventure, giving it more texture for the players to grasp. Over time, most characters react by replacing their bedraggled equipment: stained cloaks, torn clothes, threadbare rope, backpacks with latches broken off, and so on.

Of course, some players never react to described usage, so it is necessary to have more equipment tear through the course of the adventure. The sole of their character's boot might crack, letting in water and perpetually soaking his foot. An entangling tree branch knocks a brooch off the cloak it is pinned to, making wearing the cloak a pain at the very least. These are simple role-playing approaches that encourage the player to eventually purchase new gear, usually with an announcement that he spends his hard-earned gold to replace his threadbare equipment.

To drive home the point, keep mental notes of these minor occurrences and describe the characters to the players at the next waypoint.

Example: Angrod opens the door to the tavern. He stands there, peering into the dim, smoke-lit room. His cloak is tied in a haphazard knot about his throat, making it bunch up around his shoulders. His belt hangs off at an angle so much so that it appears as if he has lost a great deal of weight; worse, his axe haft drags the ground with a strange scraping sound. His shoe has no sole on it, and he's standing a bit lopsided. His torn, stain-covered shirt hangs about him like a sack. He hobbles across the room looking like a bedraggled hunchback and hobo.

A description like that is usually enough to chase anyone to the local equipment shop. The CK achieves usage through play, without any dice rolling or equipment saving throws.

Weathering

Weather impacts the condition of equipment as much, if not more, than normal usage. Extreme temperature variances, moisture, and dry conditions can cause any number of problems in equipment, especially if not properly maintained. These conditions are easy enough to role-play, much as with the over-used boot with its broken sole mentioned above. In order to effectively role-play the weather's impact on equipment, it is necessary to make weather a factor in the game. It does not have to be something huge or time consuming. Simple descriptions of what the weather is doing, whether it is sunny, rainy, cold, or warm, serve to make the weather a part of the role-playing experience. Keeping mental track is easy enough to do, or you can consult the weather determination charts.

Once weather is a factor in the game, allow the characters to interact with it. If it is raining, nine times out of ten, players are going to want to put on a cloak, cover their sword, or unstring their bow. Encouraging this brings much more realism to the game, and it brings the characters into that all-important mood by further establishing the tone.

It isn't necessary to infuse a detailed meteorological weather pattern into the campaign or game, but the CK may want to keep notes on the time of year, season, and conditions to avoid altogether strange weather patterns that might misdirect players into thinking a wizard, illusionist, cleric, or druid is out mucking with the weather. Following simple seasonal weather patterns existing in reality is the easiest way, but keeping notes helps keep track and to not loose focus. **Chapter 5 World** provides some detailed information on weather patterns for the CK's world.

Once a general pattern is set up, simply keep mental notes on the wear and tear of the equipment, much like usage above, but augment it with descriptions of the conditions the weather caused.

Example: This is your fourth day on the open road, and the rains continue unabated. Your equipment, even that covered by your cloaks, is soaking wet and beginning to show signs of wear. The water has seeped into the ration packages as well, and all your food is damp, sprouting mold. The seams on your boots and clothes are beginning to weaken, as the constantly wet conditions loosen the fabric. The dyes of your shirts, pants, and cloaks have long since run out, vanishing into the mud of the road, so that only drab colors remain, and your once-colorful outfits are now brown and gray with mottled splotches of color on them. You are going to need several days to dry out, and much of your belongings, especially your food, needs replaced.

For more detail or a concrete method for tracking weather, consult the **Table 9.3 Weathering and Combat Wastage**.

Combat Wastage

Wastage through wear and tear generally takes time. Though wandering through the thick forest may cause the branch to slide up into the backpack strap, catch it, and break it in just a few seconds, the norm is a slower degradation of equipment. Weather may be dramatic, but isn't too common, and usually comes with a plot device that is cumbersome for the CK to track and follow over time. However, when dealing with equipment, the ultimate tool, where role-playing truly meets mechanics, is in the combat round. Combat wastage is immediate and effective.

It does not take a great leap of imagination to envision the destruction of weapons and armor in the midst of combat. Many weapons are specifically designed to destroy armor through crushing or penetrating blows. The mace, for example, is a bludgeoning weapon whose purpose is to so dent plate that the mail becomes useless, almost becoming an impediment to the user. The CK should take the opportunity during the course of combat to describe the horrid effects this rough treatment has on the characters' weapons and armor. Repeated blows can dull sharp edges, reducing their effectiveness. Cutting blades score divots in wood and light iron. Chipped or heavily used wood

may break; hafts can break with ease. Shield straps may break, the shield's facing may become too dented to allow use, or the shield may shatter or break altogether. Bow strings may break, as might the bow itself. The list goes on and on, and it should be easy to apply.

Role-playing combat wastage is easy to do. During the course of combat, use the various weapons to their designed purpose. Describe the whirling maelstrom of blades and axes as they cut and hack through armor and other weapons and items. It is not necessary to use any challenge rolls to deal with wastage. Simple descriptions are enough, and the player must generally accept whatever fate serves up.

Example: Angrod wades into combat with his heavy-bladed axe and large iron shield. He falls upon the hapless orcs with a battle frenzy born of his raging hatred of their ilk. He cleaves to the left and right, wounding or slaying his opponents. But his triumph is short-lived, as a mighty orc, upon rolling a natural 20 (see **Note** below and **Simple Rules for Combat Wastage**), smashes Angrod's shield from above, the force of the blow tearing both arm straps from their holdings and knocking the shield to the ground. Not only has Angrod lost the shield, but it is useless as armor until a blacksmith repairs it.

Note: It is very easy to over do combat wastage. The constant and complete destruction of weapons and armor is not only unrealistic but promises to become frustrating and irritating to the players who eventually rebel against the heavy-handed treatment. It is best to preserve the actual destruction of gear to momentous events occurring in the combat round: a death blow or the roll of a natural 20 or a natural 1 for overwhelming effect, etc.

A more controlled manner of role-playing wastage involves these simple rules:

Simple Rules for Combat Wastage

When role playing combat wastage it is always good to include a little dice rolling as well. All normal wastage should be tracked by the CK/players when role playing the wastage with the exceptions of critical hits and misses. Use these rare opportunities to allow the dice to propel the wastage forward.

When a character or foe rolls a natural 20 against an opponent, roll a saving throw for the opponent's stricken armor or shield, on a roll of 1 or 2 the equipment has suffered damage requiring a blacksmith's attention, and the character's AC drops one or two points. These rolls are cumulative.

When a character or foe rolls a natural 1 for his attack, roll a saving throw for his weapon. On a roll of 1 or 2 the weapon has suffered damage requiring a blacksmith's attention, and the weapon's damage drops by -2. These rolls are cumulative.

These rules only extend to any armor, weapons, or pieces of equipment struck by a natural 20 or involved in a natural 1.

Tracking Equipment Usage

If role-playing usage does not adequately address the need of the player to reequip, the Castle Keeper may want to require characters to make periodic equipment checks. This approach works well if it is used in moderation. Constantly checking the condition of the players' equipment is not particularly fun, and it should never consume anymore than a few seconds of game time. At the end of an adventure, or after several adventures, require each player to roll on **Table 9.2 Equipment Usage**. They should make two rolls: one for clothes and other worn items (excluding armor, but including cloaks, hats, gloves, and boots, for example), and the other for general equipment such as rope, hammers, sleeping gear etc. The Castle Keeper must keep track of the checks made; the CK usually tracks this in the same manner in which he tracks food usage.

Each category represents a check. The first time a check is made, reference the New category. The second time a check is made, reference the Used category. The third time a check is made, reference the Worn category, and so on. If the item in question fails the check, then it needs repairing or replacing. The CK may opt to check each item individually, or he may do a general check of all items.

The number listed below each category is the item's challenge class (CC), the target number required to pass the equipment check. This check has no bonuses or penalties to it, nor does it have a challenge level modifier. Roll a d20; any roll equal to or greater than the listed challenge class means the item is still serviceable. Any roll below the listed number means the item is no longer useful and must be replaced. One roll should be made for clothing and another for gear, with each roll being for the group as a whole. Thus, if a clothing check fails, then all the character's clothing needs to be replaced.

TABLE 9.2 EQUIPMENT USAGE

Equipment	New	Used	Worn	Threadbare
Clothing	CC 6	CC 10	CC 14	CC 18
Gear	CC 3	CC 5	CC 7	CC 9

Example: After completing a rigorous adventure into the mountains and through a dungeon, the party's clothing and gear is showing some signs of usage. Rather than track each piece of gear or clothing, the CK requires everyone to make one roll for each of these items. Angrod rolls an 11 for his clothing and a 14 for his gear; checking against the New category (CC 6 for clothing and CC 3 for gear), all his equipment survives. Several sessions later, a second check is made for the items against the Used category. Angrod rolls a 9 for his clothing and an 11 for gear. The gear survives the journey, but his clothing, which need a 10 to save, has failed, so he needs to replace his attire, such as pants, boots, cloaks, etc. After the character purchases new garments, the clothing is later checked against the New category, but his gear will be checked under the Worn category (for its third check).

Tracking Weathering & Combat Wastage

Role-playing equipment wastage and usage is sometimes not the easiest direction for CKs or players to take. They either desire a more detailed approach, or need more information to impress a realistic fell upon the game. In that case follow the rules set down for **Tables 9.4-9.7**. For example, extreme circumstances beyond the critical hit call for immediate resolutions. **Castles & Crusades** is replete with extreme circumstances: magical fire, crushing blows, hurled boulders, lightning strikes, etc. Like weathering and combat wastage, these events are not constant conditions. Characters enter extreme environments or find themselves caught up in extreme situations in which the equipment at hand might suffer extraordinary damage. This affects all equipment, including normal gear and arms and armor.

Use **Tables 9.2-9.5** any time the situation calls for them; these tables can be used in conjunction with role-playing equipment loss, combat wastage, weathering, usages, etc. They are designed for immediate adjudication of equipment loss.

These tables operate in the same manner as **Table 9.2** does. The number listed below each category is the item's challenge class (CC), the target number required to pass the equipment check. This check has no bonuses or penalties to it, nor does it have a challenge level modifier, unless it is a blow, crushing, blow, piercing, blow, slashing. Roll a d20; any roll equal to or greater than the listed challenge class means the item(s) is still serviceable. Any roll below the listed number means the item is no longer useful and must be replaced. One roll should be made for clothing and another for gear, with each roll being for the group as a whole; thus, if a clothing check fails, then all the character's clothing needs to be replaced.

The damage and wastage a creature does is treated much the same as a weapon. When a creature strikes with a natural 20, the Castle Keeper rolls 1d6, and on a six, there is damage to the armor and/or equipment of the defender. When the player character strikes at a creature and rolls 1 on a d20, there is damage to the attacker's weapon.

The enchanted breath of a dragon or the dangerous spit of a monster is a highly magical effect that does a great deal more than a normal substance of the same type.

Example: The alchemist Donal tested out hundreds of materials trying to make a fireproof suit. He figures he could sell it to towns for their fire fighters to use. After much research, he found a type of silk that wouldn't burn. His first huge sale was to the king of a large empire. The king made the alchemist walk through a large fire in one of the silk uniforms and it worked perfectly. In a month, the fire fighters of the city were able to put out huge fires and not get burnt. The alchemist thought his fame was made and he would be a rich man soon. That same year an ancient red dragon came to the countryside of the kingdom and ate everything in sight. Ten of the most famous heroes of the kingdom donned the silk fire suits and drew their magical swords to fight the dragon. In one huge dragon fire breath, the ten men were burnt just the way the dragon liked them and quickly eaten. The king took the head of the alchemist as the price to pay for poor workmanship.

TABLE 9.3 WEATHERING & COMBAT WASTAGE

Condition	Bronze	Ceramics	Glass	Gold	Iron	Silver	Steel	Stone
Abrasion	CC5	CC8	CC6	CC6	CC8	CC6	CC3	CC6
Acid Attack	CC10	N/A	N/A	CC8	CC11	CC11	CC12	CC13
Alkali	CC8	N/A	N/A	CC9	CC10	CC10	CC9	CC10
Bending	CC9	BREAK	BREAK	CC11	CC10	CC11	CC13	BREAK
Blow, Crushing*	CC8	BREAK	BREAK	CC6	CC9	CC6	CC12	CC10
Blow, Piercing*	CC10	BREAK	BREAK	CC8	CC11	CC8	CC14	CC12
Blow, Slashing*	CC12	CC14	CC14	CC10	CC13	CC10	CC16	CC14
Cold	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	CC10
Cold, Magic	CC8	CC6	CC6	CC8	CC8	CC8	CC10	CC10
Electricity	CC7	N/A	N/A	CC10	CC8	CC10	CC12	N/A
Electricity, Magic	CC14	N/A	N/A	CC17	CC15	CC17	CC19	N/A
Falling	CC6	BREAK	BREAK	CC7	CC6	CC7	CC10	BREAK
Fire	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Fire, Magic	CC10	N/A	CC12	CC12	CC11	CC12	CC14	CC10
Heat	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Heat, Magic	CC8	N/A	CC16	CC10	CC8	CC10	CC12	CC10
Lightning	CC15	CC10	CC11	CC13	CC16	CC14	CC15	CC10
Lightning, Magic	CC16	CC12	CC13	CC15	CC18	CC16	CC17	CC12
Sound	CC3	CC6	CC8	CC3	CC4	CC5	CC2	CC3
Sound, Magic	CC10	BREAK	BREAK	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	CC8
Stretching	CC11	BREAK	BREAK	CC13	CC12	CC13	CC15	BREAK
Water, Crushing	CC9	BREAK	BREAK	CC11	CC10	CC11	CC13	BREAK
Water, Soaking	CC3	N/A	N/A	N/A	CC4	N/A	CC4	CC5
Weight	CC10	CC12	CC12	CC11	CC10	CC11	CC18	CC12
Weight, Crushing	CC8	BREAK	BREAK	CC6	CC9	CC6	CC12	CC10
Wind	CC6	CC4	CC4	CC5	CC5	CC5	CC4	CC4
Wind, Magic	CC8	CC6	CC6	CC7	CC7	CC7	CC6	CC6

*Add attacker strength bonus modifications to the existing CC. A hill giant strikes an iron shield with a normal blow. The shield's listed CC is 9, the giant's strength bonus, +3, serves as the CL, so the final CC is 12.

Expert or Magical Weapons: If the item is of expert workmanship, it reduces the item's challenge-class save by -2, if magical it is -2 or equal to the bonus, whichever is greater, when rolling to see if it is damaged. In addition, if the item is magical or of expert workmanship and the category's result shows BREAK, instead give the item a challenge class (CC) of 20 to save because of its high quality.

N/A: The condition does not influence the material.

BREAK: The condition automatically breaks the material.

TABLE 9.4 MONSTER COMBAT WASTAGE

Monster Attack Form	Bronze	Ceramics	Glass	Gold	Iron	Silver	Steel	Stone
Aboleth Slime	CC3	CC5	N/A	CC4	CC9	N/A	CC11	N/A
Ankheg Acid Spit	CC15	CC6	CC8	CC16	CC19	CC17	CC20	CC18
Arrowhawk Electric Ray	CC14	N/A	N/A	CC17	CC15	CC17	CC19	N/A
Behir Static Electricity Arc	CC14	N/A	N/A	CC17	CC15	CC17	CC19	N/A
Black Pudding Acid	CC15	CC6	CC8	CC16	CC19	CC17	CC20	CC18
Chimera Flame	CC11	N/A	CC13	CC13	CC12	CC13	CC15	CC11

Cloaker Sonic Moan	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cockatrice Petrification	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Djinni Whirlwind	CC6	CC8	CC8	CC5	CC4	CC5	CC3	CC6
Dragon, Black Acid	CC16	N/A	N/A	CC19	CC17	CC19	CC21	CC10
Dragon, Blue Electrical Arc	CC16	CC4	CC6	CC19	CC17	CC19	CC21	CC10
Dragon, Green Caustic Vapor	CC13	CC4	CC6	CC14	CC17	CC15	CC18	CC16
Dragon, Red Fire	CC12	CC4	CC14	CC14	CC13	CC14	CC16	CC12
Dragon, White Frost	CC11	CC9	CC9	CC11	CC11	CC11	CC13	CC13
Dragon, Bronze Lightning	CC17	CC4	CC5	CC20	CC18	CC20	CC21	CC10
Dragon, Bronze Repulsion	CC9	BREAK	BREAK	CC11	CC10	CC11	CC13	BREAK
Dragon, Copper Caustic Acid	CC16	N/A	N/A	CC19	CC17	CC19	CC21	CC10
Dragon, Copper Slow Gas	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dragon, Gold Toxic Gas	CC16	N/A	N/A	CC19	CC17	CC19	CC21	CC10
Dragon, Gold Flame	CC12	CC4	CC14	CC14	CC13	CC14	CC16	CC12
Dragon, Silver Frigid Air	CC11	CC9	CC9	CC11	CC11	CC11	CC13	CC13
Dragon, Silver Paralysis Gas	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dragonne Sonic Roar	CC11	CC9	CC9	CC11	CC11	CC11	CC13	CC13
Efreeti Heat	CC11	N/A	CC13	CC13	CC12	CC13	CC15	CC11
Elemental, Air Whirlwind	CC6	CC8	CC8	CC5	CC4	CC5	CC3	CC6
Elemental, Fire Burn	CC11	N/A	CC13	CC13	CC12	CC13	CC15	CC11
Elemental, Water Drench	CC9	BREAK	BREAK	CC11	CC10	CC11	CC13	BREAK
Frost Worm Ice Crystals	CC9	CC7	CC7	CC9	CC9	CC9	CC11	CC11
Gelatinous Cube Acid	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Gibbering Mouther Spit	CC15	CC6	CC8	CC16	CC19	CC17	CC20	CC18
Gorgon Petrify Gas	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Gray Ooze Acid	CC15	CC6	CC8	CC16	CC19	CC17	CC20	CC18
Green Slime Devouring Acid	CC16	N/A	N/A	CC19	CC17	CC19	CC21	CC10
Hell Hound Fire	CC11	N/A	CC13	CC13	CC12	CC13	CC15	CC11
Iron Golem Poisonous Vapor	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Jaculus Spit	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Manticore Spike	CC17	CC19	CC19	CC18	CC19	CC18	CC20	CC17
Nightmare Burning Hooves	CC11	N/A	CC13	CC13	CC12	CC13	CC15	CC11
Ochre Jelly	CC15	CC6	CC8	CC16	CC19	CC17	CC20	CC18
Pyrohydra Fire	CC11	N/A	CC13	CC13	CC12	CC13	CC15	CC11
Remorhaz Heat	CC11	N/A	CC13	CC13	CC12	CC13	CC15	CC11
Salamander Heat	CC11	N/A	CC13	CC13	CC12	CC13	CC15	CC11
Travis Wyrm Heat	CC11	N/A	CC13	CC13	CC12	CC13	CC15	CC11
Will-o'-Wisp Shock Touch	CC14	N/A	N/A	CC17	CC15	CC17	CC19	N/A
Winter Wolf Frigid Slush	CC9	CC7	CC7	CC9	CC9	CC9	CC11	CC11
Yrthak Sonic Lance	CC12	CC4	CC14	CC14	CC13	CC14	CC16	CC12

*The magical effect is dependant on the flesh to stone saving throw of the character holding the materials in the chart. The use of Gorgon gas on a piece of bronze does not turn it to stone. However, when the piece of bronze is held by a character that is petrified by the gorgon, the bronze turns to stone with the character.

The damage and wastage a creature does is much the same as a weapon. When a creature strikes with a natural 20 the Castle Keeper rolls 1d6 and on a six there is damage to the armor and/or equipment of the player character being attacked. When the player character strikes at a creature and rolls 1 on a d20 there is damage to the weapon of the player character.

TABLE 9.5 MONSTER PHYSICAL COMBAT WASTAGE

Condition	Bronze	Ceramics	Glass	Gold	Iron	Silver	Steel	Stone
Bite, Small Creature	N/A	CC15	CC16	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Bite, Medium Creature	CC15	CC17	CC17	CC16	CC17	CC16	CC18	CC15
Bite, Large Creature	CC17	CC19	CC19	CC18	CC19	CC18	CC20	CC17
Claw, Small Creature	N/A	CC15	CC16	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Claw, Medium Creature	CC14	CC16	CC16	CC15	CC16	CC15	CC17	CC14
Claw, Large Creature	CC16	CC18	CC18	CC17	CC18	CC17	CC19	CC16
Fist, Medium Creature	CC8	CC10	CC13	CC6	CC6	CC6	CC4	CC8
Fist, Large Creature	CC10	CC12	CC15	CC8	CC8	CC8	CC6	CC10
Horn, Small Creature	CC6	CC8	CC8	CC5	CC4	CC5	CC3	CC6
Horn, Medium Creature	CC8	CC10	CC10	CC7	CC6	CC7	CC5	CC8
Horn, Large Creature	CC10	CC12	CC12	CC9	CC8	CC9	CC7	CC10
Hug, Medium Creature	CC12	CC14	CC14	CC11	CC10	CC11	CC9	CC12
Hug, Large Creature	CC14	CC16	CC16	CC13	CC12	CC13	CC11	CC13
Slam, Medium Creature	CC6	CC10	CC12	CC8	CC5	CC8	CC4	CC9
Slam, Large Creature	CC9	CC13	CC15	CC11	CC8	CC11	CC7	CC12
Stomp, Medium Creature	CC10	CC12	CC12	CC9	CC8	CC9	CC7	CC10
Stomp, Large Creature	CC12	CC14	CC14	CC11	CC10	CC11	CC9	CC12
Tail Whip, Medium Creature	CC6	CC8	CC8	CC5	CC4	CC5	CC3	CC6
Tail Whip, Large Creature	CC8	CC10	CC10	CC7	CC6	CC7	CC5	CC8
Talon, Small Creature	N/A	CC15	CC16	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Talon, Medium Creature	CC15	CC17	CC17	CC16	CC17	CC16	CC18	CC15
Talon, Large Creature	CC17	CC19	CC19	CC18	CC19	CC18	CC20	CC17
Tentacle, Small Creature	CC6	CC8	CC8	CC5	CC4	CC5	CC3	CC6
Tentacle, Medium Creature	CC8	CC10	CC10	CC7	CC6	CC7	CC5	CC8
Tentacle, Large Creature	CC10	CC12	CC12	CC9	CC8	CC9	CC7	CC10
Wing Beat, Large Creature	CC6	CC8	CC8	CC5	CC4	CC5	CC3	CC6

TABLE 9.6 SOFT MATERIALS WEATHERING & COMBAT WASTAGE

Condition	Bone	Cloth	Fur	Leather	Leather	Paper	Rope	Wood, H	Wood, S
Abrasion	CC15	CC17	CC12	CC9	CC7	BREAK	CC	CC7	CC15
Acid Attack	BREAK	BREAK	CC17	CC16	CC15	BREAK	BREAK	CC18	BREAK
Alkali	CC10	CC15	CC13	CC11	CC10	CC15	CC11	CC10	CC10
Bending	BREAK	CC8	CC6	CC4	CC6	CC10	CC4	BREAK	BREAK
Blow, Crushing*	BREAK	CC19	CC17	CC15	CC13	BREAK	CC17	BREAK	BREAK
Blow, Normal*	BREAK	CC15	CC13	CC11	CC9	BREAK	CC11	CC10	BREAK
Blow, Slashing*	BREAK	BREAK	CC15	CC13	CC11	BREAK	CC15	CC11	BREAK
Cold	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Cold, Magic	BREAK	CC18	CC16	CC14	CC12	BREAK	CC14	CC12	BREAK
Electricity	CC18	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	CC18	BREAK	BREAK	CC18	BREAK
Electricity, Magic	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
Falling	CC18	CC8	CC8	CC8	CC6	CC8	CC4	CC18	BREAK
Fire	CC18	BREAK	BREAK	CC18	CC16	BREAK	CC18	CC12	CC18
Fire, Magic	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
Heat	CC18	BREAK	CC18	CC10	CC8	BREAK	CC18	CC16	BREAK
Heat, Magic	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK

Lightning	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
Lightning, Magic	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
Sound	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	CC10	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sound, Magic	CC10	CC12	CC10	CC8	CC6	BREAK	CC10	CC8	CC10
Stretching	BREAK	CC15	CC13	CC11	CC9	BREAK	CC11	BREAK	BREAK
Water, Crushing	BREAK	CC18	CC16	CC14	CC12	BREAK	CC14	BREAK	BREAK
Water, Soaking	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	BREAK	N/A	N/A	N/A
Weight	BREAK	CC10	CC8	CC6	CC4	BREAK	CC6	CC10	BREAK
Weight, Crushing	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	CC10	CC8	BREAK	CC10	BREAK	BREAK
Wind	CC10	CC13	CC14	CC15	CC16	BREAK	CC10	CC6	CC8
Wind, Magic	CC12	CC15	CC16	CC17	CC18	BREAK	CC12	CC8	CC10

*Add attacker strength bonus modifications to the existing CC. A hill giant strikes an wood shield with a normal blow. The shield's listed CC is 10, the giant's strength bonus, +3, serves as the CL, so the final CC is 13.

WEATHERING & COMBAT CONDITIONS

Abrasion: Items rub constantly against other things. Such rubbing doesn't usually cause a problem, but rough surfaces can cut into and eventually tear items. When a climbing rope is used against a stone wall, the wall can abrade the rope. A sword used to continually bash against many types of shields causes a weakness in the sword's metal, causing it to crack.

Acid Attack: Acid has a corrosive influence on most surfaces that pits and destroys those surfaces on contact with the acid.

Alkali: Prolonged exposure to salt, such as salt water, has a severe drying effect, allowing the salt to dry on the surface. Dried seawater can do this. The salt on objects close to the sea suffer erosion; any person living near the sea experiences this constantly.

Bending: When items are continually bent, a weakness forms, causing further bending to eventually break the item. Naturally, when ceramics and glass and stone are bent, they break.

Blow, Crushing: The blow doesn't just smash into the item, but a great deal of weight is also applied behind the blow. This assumes the attempt to strike the item was successful. In the normal give and take of combat, it is not the intention of this entry to force a combat wastage roll after every strike, but only after receiving massive blows from a very strong creature (like a giant), being damaged by called shots, or being hit by a natural 20 on an attack roll.

Blow, Piercing: The blow is designed to punch into and through the material. This assumes the attempt to strike the item was successful. In the normal give and take of combat, it is not the intention of this entry to force a combat wastage roll after every strike, but only after receiving massive blows from a very strong creature (like a directed claw strike from a dragon), being damaged by called shots, or being hit by a natural 20 on an attack roll.

Blow, Slashing: The edge of a weapon is drawn across the surface of the material, with the intent to cut the material. This assumes the attempt to strike the item was successful. In the normal give and take of combat, it is not the intention of this entry to force a combat wastage roll, but only after receiving massive blows from a very strong creature's blade, being damaged by called shots, or being hit by a natural 20 on an attack roll.

Cold: Cold and moisture can crack any material. This is biting cold, such as an iced-over lake, and not the cold of outer space.

Cold, Magical: Magical cold harms and destroys materials even faster than natural cold. The quick freezing of things does damage on a cellular level.

Electricity: Electricity does come naturally in the form shocks from some types of creatures like eels. This effect happens in a close area near a lightning strike, as the energy spreads from the impact point.

Electricity, Magical: This attack constitutes any electrical attack derived from a spell or magical beast. This energy damages objects or kills targets. It's a stronger energy than most lightning strikes.

Falling: These falls are always more than 10 feet and onto hard surfaces. Falling into water or into cushioning trees doesn't count in this definition, as those falls are cushioned and not likely to harm objects on the body.

Fire: This is a standard fire like that of a woodpile. It does damage, but it isn't the damage from an smithy forge fire.

Fire, Magical: This intense magical blaze is hotter than all normal fires and is designed to do damage and to kill. The intense nature of this fire can easily melt most metals.

Heat: Hotter than a wood fire, this is the heat caused by lava or by molten metal. Anything that can burn will ignite in the presence of this heat.

Heat, Magical: Any fire-based attack derived from a spell or magical beast. Magical heat can be as hot as dragon fire and is designed to destroy. Anything that can burn will burn under the effects of this heat.

Lightning: Lightning coming from the skies is extremely powerful, with great damaging potential. However, the effect can pass without damage through bodies, metals, and woods under the right circumstances.

Lightning, Magical: Any lightning-based attack derived from a spell or magical beast. Whatever this form of lightning hits, it damages but cannot pass through an object under any conditions.

Sound: This is the loud roar of a large monster or the noise made by large pieces of metal pounding on each other. While the noise is hard on the ears, it isn't usually damaging unless constantly repeated, so that the vibrations caused by the sound do damage to fragile materials.

Sound, Magical: The roar of an androsphinx is powerful enough to cause damage to almost any material. The older dragons are also capable of bellowing out enough sound to cause damage.

Stretching: Clothing, ropes, armor straps, and similar items stretch from use. As these materials get used, they wear out.

Water, Crushing: When tons of water come down on an object, the water strikes with great force, crushing items.

Water, Soaking: This is more than just an hour's soaking in water. It's several days or more of complete immersion in water.

Weight: This is a constant pressure placed on an object. Weights that are so light they haven't the chance to do damage are not considered in this definition.

Weight, Crushing: This is a massive amount of weight placed on an object. It has a good chance to do damage to whatever it is pressing upon. Something like a massive stone or a collapsed building would fit this definition.

Wind: This is a tornado-generated wind.

Wind, Magical: Any wind-based attack derived from a spell or magical beast. Magical winds are created to destroy something and are much more powerful than even the winds from a powerful tornado.

CREATURE COMBAT CONDITIONS CHART DEFINED

Bite, Small Creature: Examples of this bite include those by a goose's bill, a small dog, or a barracuda.

Bite, Medium Creature: Examples of this bite include those by a large dog, a black bear, or a wolverine's attack.

Bite, Large Creature: Examples of this bite include those by a cave bear, a great white shark, or a dragon.

Claw, Small Creature: Examples of this include a crab's pincer, a scorpion's grab, or a lobster claw strike.

Claw, Medium Creature: Examples of this include a mountain lion's paw, a panther's strike, or a lion's strike.

Claw, Large Creature: Examples of this include an achaierai strike, a dragon strike, or a dragonne strike.

Fist, Medium Creature: Examples of this include a human's strike, an orc's strike, or a baboon's punch.

Fist, Large Creature: Examples of this include an ogre's strike, a giant's fists, or a titan's punch.

Horn, Small Creature: An example of this includes an imp's strike.

Horn, Medium Creature: Examples of this include horn attacks from gargoyles, unicorns, or minotaurs.

Horn, Large Creature: Examples of this include horn attacks from gorgons, bulls, and rhinoceroses.

Hug, Medium Creature: Examples of this include hug attacks from brown bears, human wrestlers, and orcs.

Hug, Large Creature: Examples of this include hug attacks from cave bears, golden bears, or werebears.

Stomp, Medium Creature: Examples of this include stomp attacks from ogres, trampling bulls, or trolls.

Stomp, Large Creature: Examples of this include stomp attacks from trampling elephants, dinosaurs, or giant lizards.

Talon, Small Creature: Examples of this include talon attacks from hawks, cranes, or birds of prey.

Talon, Medium Creature: Examples of this include talon attacks from hippogriffs, griffons, or harpies.

Talon, Large Creature: Examples of this include talon attacks from devourers, white dragons, or rocs.

Tail Whip, Medium Creature: Examples of this include tail attacks from basilisks, raptors, or dinosaurs.

Tail Whip, Large Creature: Examples of this include tail attacks from brontosauri, belkers, or ancient white dragons.

Tentacle, Small Creature: Examples of this include tentacle attacks from octopi, land krakens, or giant slugs.

Tentacle, Medium Creature: Examples of this include tentacle attacks from giant octopi, assassin vines, or violet fungi.

Tentacle, Large Creature: Examples of this include tentacle attacks from giant squids, aboleths, or krakens.

Wing Beat, Large Creature: Examples of this include wing attacks from old dragons (winged), rocs, or giant eagles.

Example: The wizard tries to jump over a pit and fails his check. The wizard falls into the pit and lands on his backpack. Everything within suffers a crushing blow. The CK wishes the fall to have some impact on the character so chooses to randomly determine what might have been damaged. Consulting **Table 9.4**, he rolls a d8 (1 for each category) and rolls an 8; the result is stone. He asks his player what, if any, stone the player has on his character. If there is no stone, there isn't a problem, and nothing happens. Unfortunately for the player, he has a *luck stone*. The CK consults **Table 9.3 Weathering & Combat Conditions Wastage**, looking up crushing weight for the stone category, and he notes its challenge class is 10; the CK adds +2 to the roll because the luck stone is a magical item. The CK rolls a 15 in front of the player, adds +2, for a total of 17; the stone is fine.

EXPERT EQUIPMENT

In the middle ages, the fabrication process used carbon and iron and generally made iron weapons. Very much by accident, smiths learned the perfect mixture of heated iron and carbon made steel. Steel weapons, armor, and shields were vastly superior to their iron counterparts. Steel weapons didn't break as much as iron. Iron weapons with edges needed sharpening after every battle, but steel weapons held their edge much longer.

Historically, there are many examples of famous weapons being given names by their equally famous owners. Tizona was El Cid's sword, Legbiter was the viking king Magnus Bareleg's weapon, and Joyeuse was the sword of Charlemagne. All of these were accidentally crafted steel swords given names because they were so powerful versus iron weapons and armor.

Consider granting each piece of expert armor or weapons a name in your campaign. Doing so fleshes out the item, giving it more value than a simple item, and often such items become objects for adventure. They often have unusual patterns to their surface, and their prices should be so large that only adventuring for them is worth the effort.

Example: The party finds a great helm with dragonheads embossed all over it. After talking to a sage, the party learns that this expertly made helm formerly belonged to Skellar the Bold. In fact, history notes that Skellar also owned a suit of armor, a shield, and a maul all with the embossed dragon pattern. Suddenly, the PCs want to embark on a quest to recover all of Skellar's equipment. The sage presents clues about Skellar's last documented location: the Renee Mountains.

EXISTING EXPERT WEAPONS & ARMOR

Player characters should rarely be able to walk into a smithy and buy expert equipment. These items should be used by powerful foes in the dungeons and castles the characters explore. Along the same lines, while every merchant knows an expert piece of armor goes for 10 times its normal cost, expert weapons go for 25 times the weapon's normal cost; of course, merchants will only buy expert weapons and armor for half of their true value or less.

CHAPTER 10 – LAND AS TREASURE

As discussed in **Monsters & Treasure**, Land and Title are perfect rewards for hard fought campaigns and serve to shake up the normal gold and magical treasure that veteran players are sometimes accustomed to earning. The enterprising Castle Keeper offers Land and Title in order to both reward the character or characters and propel the game in new directions. Understanding when to offer land as treasure and how to integrate it into the ongoing game are critical elements to making land as treasure an enjoyable and workable aspect of the game. When used correctly, it can heighten the experiences of any game and bring the players to the table with enthusiasm.

Castles & Crusades is not particularly limited to any one type or genre of game. But for the purposes of this chapter we are using Medieval Europe as our baseline. Please note that the term Land as treasure is used throughout this chapter but covers any type of land, title, entitlement, or endowment treasure that the CK might devise, from the guildhall orders to the landed estate.

NEW HORIZONS

The Castle Keeper's main task is to engage the character in a fun and exciting game of chance and adventure. The setting is the arena within which this fun takes place. Settings range from the very detailed to the simple (see **Chapter 5 The World**). Troll Lord Games' Aihrde Setting is complete with history, racial groups and sub-groups, political institutions, cosmology, and affords the CK and players a virtual tapestry within which to weave their own stories. However, such detail is by no means necessary; the game's setting need have no further depth than "the forest path looms."

No matter the depth of the setting, this is where the action takes place and the players conduct the activities of their characters. The setting is traditionally the CK's realm. They design it, creating its structure, the rules that guide it, and the monsters that people it. Rarely are player opinions sought and even less rare are they acted upon and integrated into the game. In many respects, the setting is akin to the video game console. As any table top gamer recognizes the video console is very limited. It creates boundaries that the gamer cannot pass over or through. The CK's setting is often too much akin to this, there are established boundaries that restrict the actual play and in some cases the imagination of the player.

Lands as treasure offer the CK the perfect tool to set aside this gaming paradigm and allow the characters themselves to interact directly with the setting and the game. Furthermore, the characters are able to change the course of its history and become actual participants in the world's creation. In many regards this makes them part of the setting itself.

Too often a CK shies away from this concept. At first mention of granting players a greater role in the setting, visions of madness and destruction emanating from every wild, hair-brained idea that a player may put forward come to their minds. They see an endless debate over strange questions pertaining to bizarre cultural, ecological, and social issues that have no grounding in the rich flavor and or history of their setting. "No the Kopesh

sword is a near-eastern weapon; this is a medieval European environment. They have no knowledge of such a blade!"

This attitude is slightly misplaced. The setting should be a vibrant and evolving environment. The CK must make adjustments to it from time to time, refining aspects, or reacting to the very exploits that their players achieve. There is no reason that allowing characters a freer hand, or any hand at all in the local setting, should have any more impact than do the actions they routinely take. If the characters slay the local giant that is terrorizing the lands of Krackenmore, they have in effect impacted the entire region of the world, realistically changing the local political environment, and if one wanted to be extremely technical, the ecological, social, and economic environment as well. Even plundering a dungeon liberates a region of the terror of the undead that rose from its depths with vast ramifications on the surrounding region. The argument states that these are actions within the CK's control and as such remain acceptable because they are controllable.

In fact, the opposite is true. By allowing the players a greater role in the setting, it adds to their own involvement, giving them a vested interest beyond the acquisition of gold and silver, to work within the setting. To put it frankly, allowing players to assume greater roles in the setting is something akin to the political concept "keep your friends close and your enemies closer." The player whose knight earns the title of Duke and stands as one of the King's men is far less likely to do things detrimental to the Court and country, such as mouthing off to their rightful lord, if he is a part of that Court. The setting itself must be a vibrant arena in order to keep the players captivated and interested in playing in said setting. Creating a setting in which all the controls are there must by its very nature wear on the players and bore them into wanting to do something else or play some other game.

The Setting should be the arena for the adventure, not the restricted access club. Bringing the characters into the setting allows the CK to bring the players more into the game. This does not mean that the CK must yield to the player's opinions or his desire. This in no way impairs the CK's ability to run his own game and maintain clearly defined setting rules. Maintaining control of the integrated setting is as important as maintaining control over any interactive aspects of **Castles & Crusades**.

INVOLVING THE CHARACTER

As discussed in **Chapter 3: Expanding Equipment** above, equipment offers the player one of the few areas of control for his character. This is relatively important as it allows the player direct involvement in the role playing game, it is an area that they control. They choose what they wear, what they fight with, how they look and more. Bringing land as treasure to the table offers a whole new venue of player control. Now, the player has the opportunity to take a small portion of the world and make it theirs by creating structures, appointing people to posts, interacting with the locals from a position of power; in general becoming involved in the ongoing events.

This involvement ranges from the simple to the very complex and depends completely upon the designs of the CK and the interests of the players. Land ownership and entitlement in fantasy games is every bit as complex as it is in the real world and as it certainly was in Feudal Europe. There are no real defining limitations other than those imposed by the CK and player.

It is perfectly natural for a player to enjoy receiving land but want no part in managing it. After all, the game is one of epic adventure, not epic book keeping, tax rolls, land development and so on. Awarding land as treasure and removing it all to the background role is perfectly workable in any game. Often lords and knights possessed land in provinces they never visited, trusting their stewards to manage the affairs of their estates. Absentee landlords are normal and work perfectly for those players who like to take a light handed approach to such game concepts or even to those games that have a light approach to the setting. A simple and quick calculation by the CK, designed off the needs of the game, or through the charts below generates the necessary yield of any land or title.

Example: Hale is a young Knight who recently rescued the village of Hawthorne from an ungern attack. Overjoyed, the local lord, Baron Charles of Shipp, decides to award him for his efforts. The Baron Knights Hale and grants him the very village he saved as a fief. The newly knighted Sir Hale has entered the ranks of the nobility, though at its lowest rung. Hale accepts the honor fully aware that he does not own the village, as ownership remains with the Baron, but that all the income from crops and other yields are his so long as he swear fealty, with all its incumbent obligations, to the baron. The CK must now determine what benefits if any the village reaps for the character. Without consulting the charts below the CK determines that a constant source of money and a safe base of operations are more important for the game and arbitrarily tells the player that the village yields about 15gp a month, with which the character can do as he chooses. Wanting the party to have a place to fall back and recuperate, the CK quickly comes up with a deal whereby the profits of the village can go to building a castle on the land. It may take 2-6 months to build a small castle, and several years to pay it off but it is very realistic. The player, not wishing to bury the game in a lot of money tracking agrees. The impact on the party, the character, and the game is huge but does not in any way slow down the pace. Within a short period of game time, the party has a safe base of operations where they can store their treasure, heal up, or do whatever else they need to do. In turn, the CK has created a whole wealth of adventure material in the local surroundings, with the Baron and his court, and whatever else creeps behind the CK's screens.

A TIME OF REST

Land as treasure is actually a natural outcome of playing the game itself. As the characters gain in levels, it is natural to want to accumulate wealth; monies and magic come to mind first, but eventually land and power enter the equation. The castle, tower, hold, or home becomes a place to recuperate from wounds and

adventures, to advance in level, to manufacture equipment and magic items, and to plan the next spate of adventures. Many characters love the concept but don't actually voice the desire themselves, more focused on the task at hand, adventuring! By awarding it as part of the adventure the CK fills both the need the game may have and the desire of many players for something to show for their wealth. With land for treasure the player can express the success and status of their character with the treasure awarded. The young warrior is now a knighted lord in the Baron's Court, who owns both a village and soon a castle. Land as treasure opens up new vistas for the player character as the local setting can become a focal point of the game.

These new vistas open up a whole new set of role playing and adventure opportunities. With land and title, assuming the CK and players want it, comes NPC interaction like never before. The Lord who granted the title rises from obscurity to an active role in the character's fortunes. The locals who have become part of the new Knight's domicile are now beholden to him or her for protection. The neighboring lords, knights, villagers, etc. all have a role to play in fleshing out the local setting. Beyond the borders are monsters, roaming bandits and other bad guys who now must interact with the new Knight and the new Knight must interact with them.

The possibilities are almost limitless. The CK is able to work the plots in any way they see fit. The young knight and his band as protectors of the weak works as well as the Knight manipulated by the Baron to offset the power of another Knight who struggles with the Baron over land rights. These two ideas are just the tip of the iceberg of course. Intrigue ranges from the very low to the very high and involving the characters at any level can be both fun and challenging.

Depending on the scale of the land as treasure and the nature of it, this type of reward opens up city adventures as well. Different classes have different types of treasure (SEE BELOW) when it comes to giving land as treasure; the rogue who becomes Master of a Guild; the wizard whose order grants him a tower in a town of enemies; the dwarf lord given a fortress upon the edges of the wild; the possibilities are limitless. In short, the possibilities expand greatly when land and title enter the game. But all this has little place unless the game calls for it, the players want it or at least don't fight it, and the CK has designs for its future. It's important to know when to award land as treasure.

KNOW YOUR GAME

The Castle Keeper must know what type of game they are running before they award land as treasure. If the game is a fast paced series of one shot adventures that bring the character from one dungeon to the next and allow them to amass wealth and power, the land as treasure should definitely take a back seat. Consult the tables below, determine the benefits and problems with a few dice rolls, and move on. Let the characters pile up titles as if they were magic items. If the game is more involved, with a great deal of role playing and campaign arcs that carry characters through an epic thread then the tables are going to be too superficial. More work is required, i.e. NPCs fleshed out, regional maps drawn up, political and religious power structures established, etc. This can take a great deal of work (reference **CHAPTER 6** for some of this information). It's more than likely that the game falls somewhere between these two extremes and the land as treasure integration will as well.

In short, determine the amount of involvement the land as treasure is going to have in the game, adjust it accordingly, either through game play (as in the example above), role playing and design, or through the charts below. Use a combination of all of them when needed.

It is also important to note that the land as treasure can and should evolve. What may have started as a simple, unusual way to reward the party for a job well done may easily evolve into a dynamic part of the game.

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

It is the job of the CK to understand their players and their normal mode of play. In many respects this is far more important than understanding the game the CK is running. The game is adaptable, but players are often not. It is natural to become entrenched in a certain style of play and any deviation from that causes a great deal of heartache. Many players simply do not like political intrigue and most certainly detest any method of economic play. Forcing players to participate in an extravagant, multi-faceted game of political intrigue, double speak and personal innuendo often exhausts those not interested in such themes. The end result is always bad, either the player becomes bored and destructive, or just stops showing up for the game.

As with most elements in role playing games, moderation is the key. If land as treasure is awarded and one or two players begin to really enjoy it and want to play up on these new elements, but others are bored or listless, give them outs by softening the amount of actual involvement the bored players have in their newly acquired land.

EXAMPLE: Hale is now lord of his village and the castle walls fast rising on the hill of Torul. But Hale has learned that there is more to ownership than he suspected as his neighbors are attempting to drag him into their alliance against the Baron's policies, reducing the requirements of their vassalage. Here, the CK has presented the potential of a complex adventure that may involve all manner of Court intrigue. Instantly he recognizes that a few of the players are interested, but the player responsible for the village, the Knight Hale, is not so inclined. Certainly he does not take the bait and enquire more about the Court politics. This is a sure sign that though he may like the castle and village idea, he does not like role playing it out. An adventure is called for; one that perhaps involves other members of the court, but moves the action away from the land and village in order to not saddle the characters with an adventure they may not wish to embark upon.

INTEGRATING LAND AS TREASURE

No charts have been supplied that allow you to roll land as a portion of the treasure earned from an adventure. This was pointedly left out of the treasure tables in the **Monsters & Treasure** because land as treasure is something that only the CK should offer, and then only when they are certain that is what they want to do. As discussed above, it's important to note what the game's needs are and the players' desires as well.

If the CK has determined to award land as treasure, consult the tables throughout this chapter and the following definitions to better understand what it entails.

LAND OWNERSHIP DEFINED

Land ownership in a feudal society is a complicated network of ownership, homage, vassalage, and fealty that entails a variety of obligations from one party to the next. It involves transactions that are economic, political, and military. Though it is not necessary to include all facets of the feudal system in any game, we have outlined them here for the CK to pick and choose which portions of the system work best for their games, leaving the whole complicated, intricate web of obligations to the most venturesome of Castle Keepers.

Feudal land ownership involves interactions between Lords and Vassals from which come a hierarchy of nobles. These nobles form an aristocracy that governs the whole; however, the aristocracy is frequently divided into multiple political groups of varying sizes contending for power. Feudal nobility bases its power structure on two major things: land ownership from which the noble derives their wealth, and title, which commands influence, prerogatives and rights. Many portray feudal structures as centered on the King, but this is not always the case. Feudal governments exist at multiple levels, with their power structures determined by which noble owes vassalage to which lord. In fact, the nature of feudalism and the aristocracy it fosters and maintains is very complex. European titles derived their power from old Roman administrative districts as much as they did from granted rights of land ownership. Furthermore, land ownership is not restricted to a knightly class; early land ownership came from one's abilities or family position. In a fantasy role playing game such as **Castles & Crusades**, allowing clerics, druids, wizards, rogues, bards and others to participate in the feudal hierarchies of a society is more than realistic. The scope of feudal structures and the title of nobility are far beyond the aims of this guide book, but for our purposes the general outline of both feudalism and its major parts and the titles of nobility and their origins is more than sufficient.

Feudalism: A series of inter-related political, economic, and military obligations based upon land ownership. The central figure of a feudal society was a land holder, usually a warrior, who leased out his land in fiefs to other warriors. These warriors swore homage to the central figure, the lord, promising any number of obligations; usually these obligations were military (see homage below) and involved providing troops to the Lord. This is not always the case as sometimes the vassalage involves economic obligations as well. Those who swear homage become Masters of the Fief, but vassals to the Lord. These vassals can use the fief and reap all its economic benefits, build structures on it, improve it, tax it and usually hold complete control over the legal rights of the inhabitants, barring only the laws of the Lord. Actual ownership of the fief was normally, but not always, retained by the Lord (see fief below).

Vassalage can become very complex. A single individual may swear fealty (not homage) to two different Lords or find that his obligations span over the land ownership of several different Lords. Sometimes this happens through inheritance, sometimes through right of conquest. In these cases vassals could find themselves obligated to provide warriors to two different Lords, even if these Lords are fighting each other.

Example: Young Hale has sworn homage to the Baron Charles of Shipp. He is now the Baron's vassal. His vassalage requires that he send 2 mounted warriors to the Baron during each campaign season. Hale brings a young Knight Errant, Basil, into his employ, housing him in his castle, outfitting him and training him. He intends to meet his obligation with himself and Basil. However, during the course of the adventure, he finds that he has inherited, from his fallen uncle, a tract of land with two villages on it. The obligations of these villages pass to Hale. The villages, however, were originally held from the Count of Kleaves, the very powerful Lord of Olmutz. The obligations of the two villages come to supplying the Count with 5 men-at-arms and one knight on foot each year. The young Knight finds himself forced to give up one of the fiefs or to meet his obligations to two different Lords. Even if these Lords should go to war with one another, Hale's men and colors will be on both sides of the field.

Manorialism: This consisted of a system of economic and property obligations that governed the jurisdictions commonly referred to as manors. The obligations existed between the serfs, or peasants, and the Lord who owned or held the land as fief from another and the land that they lived on. In very basic terms the Lord promised protection to the land's inhabitants and in turn the inhabitants paid rent in the guise of foodstuffs, money, work or other transactions such as supplying firewood for the local manor house or castle. The inhabitants came under the legal jurisdiction of the Manor Lord. The manor's property was generally divided up into three separate classifications, the demesne, dependent and free. The demesne consisted of land worked by the Lord, meaning the proceeds of that land went directly to the Lord. The dependent land is held in lease by a peasant or serf who, in turn, pays for it in work and/or goods; some serfs paid for their land by working the demesne. The peasant owns the free land outright, but is subject to the judicial authority of the Lord and he could be taxed on its proceeds. The serfs were sometimes bound to the land, and therefore the Lord, but not always.

Lord: A noble or aristocrat with social rank derived from military power and/or land ownership. In general, a Lord owns

land, the proceeds of that land, and those who work it or on it. A Lord is able to acquire vassals through leasing his land, as a fief, and/or accepting obligations from lesser lords and knights through acts of homage. It is not impossible to envision a Lord who owns very little land but has many vassals.

Vassal: A knight or lesser lord who swears an oath of fealty or homage, to a Lord. Generally the oath of fealty or homage require the vassal to supply warriors to the Lord, however; vassalage can take on complicated obligations such as supplying equipment, foods stuffs, horses, boats, etc. The vassal in his own right can lease land out to other knights or lesser lords.

Homage: A complex ceremony and oath taking, in which the lesser lord or knight swears an oath of fealty to a Lord making the lesser lord vassal; in turn, the Lord invests the vassal with property. The act of homage is a binding act that creates a bond between the Lord and vassal in which the vassal swears to being one of the Lord's men. In effect, the Lord 'owns' the vassal. Swearing of homage can only be done to a single Lord (unlike fealty) and bears with it significant religious, social, and cultural bonds. The act of homage obligated the vassal and the Lord to certain levels of protection and military commitment.

Fealty: An act of swearing allegiance to a Lord in return for a fief. Far less complex than homage, fealty is an arrangement that can be repeated from one vassal to several Lords. The act of fealty obligated the vassal and the Lord to certain levels of protection and military commitment.

Fief: A tract of land leased or yielded from a Lord to a vassal. The vassal has the right to occupy the fief and derives all proceeds from it. From these proceeds he feeds himself, family and his own network of vassals as well as supplies the Lord with the obligations promised during the homage or fealty ceremony. The legal definitions of a fief vary greatly. Some fiefs were held for limited times and confined to one owner, meaning a son could not inherit the fief from his father. Others were held in perpetuity, meaning they were given the right of inheritance; the fief could be passed down from father to son.

Allodial Fief: A fief owned outright by the vassal free of any necessary obligations. The obligations of vassalage are removed or at the very least lessened. A Lord awards a vassal certain portions of a fief from a Lord as allodial land for service and good deed. So, a vassal may control 14 villages and the various tracts of land that go with them. But he could own several as allodial fiefs, and be responsible for the terms of vassalage for only the remainder.

NOBILITY DEFINED

The noble is a person with rank or title. The noble gains their rank or title through a variety of means. The most common method is to inherit the rank or title. But an equally common method is that a powerful Lord grants the title, the rank, the honor to a lay person, giving them all the benefits and honors of the noble. The Lord who awards nobility is generally a monarch or emperor, church prelate or similar figure vested with religious power; but this is not always the case. The ability to earn such a rank depends on the society, culture, and particular needs of a region or country. Early Europeans gained rank and title through force of arms, at times granting the rank to themselves, combating any who might deny them.

TITLES

Inherited Titles: These titles come from a variety of areas. A family connection can leave the title to its nearest chosen descendent or just as likely a region may appoint a person to the rank and grant the title that accompanies the region. Many medieval European dukes derive their title not from the King but from the Roman word Dux which loosely means commander, a title and post inherited from the office itself.

Earned Titles: Often, aspiring individuals who achieve great status through their own actions, or do great deeds for an established Lord are granted a place in the rank of the nobles. In early medieval Europe, men earned rank almost exclusively through feats of arms. Later, as the society became more complex, awarding nobility for services rendered became normal. This served to water down the older more militaristic nobles causing a great deal of tension. This can lead to societies closing the ranks of nobility, requiring patents of nobility before one is allowed to enter the hallowed halls of the aristocracy.

Patents of Nobility: A patent of nobility is given by a great noble, usually a king or emperor, which allows one entrance to the ranks of the nobles. It is generally a reaction forced upon senior Lords in order to keep them from giving out titles too randomly, thereby weakening the value of the landed aristocracy.

Confirmation: Often the new noble must be 'confirmed' in the title. The confirmation ceremony is usually the oath of fealty or homage demanded by a Lord from a vassal. This helps to reaffirm the rights of the Lord and impress upon the new noble his status as vassal in relation to his lord. It is also a time that a Lord or vassal may attempt to wring concessions out of one or the other.

HE IS A KING IN NAME ONLY

It is entirely within the realm of possibility for a noble to possess a title but no land. Land ownership and the vassalage he commands is the basis for the power of a feudal Lord, the noble. Land can be lost as easily as won and when that Lord loses land, the vassals that are upon it are lost as well.

Any number of circumstances may exist that deprives a noble of land. Perhaps circumstances forced him to award his land as allodial fiefs, a process that gradually eroded his power base, while strengthening that of his vassals. Maybe indebtedness crippled his ability to uphold the terms of vassalage. War destroyed much of his army and he was forced to cede territory and rights as part of the peace. The processes that can deprive a lord of his land but not his title are limitless. The French King,

during the reign of Louis VII was one of the militarily weakest of the French aristocracy. It was not until much later that the King managed to regain his power over his own lords. He did so because his position retained advantageous religious and cultural powers.

This concept plays perfectly into almost any land for treasure award. By granting a title without the lands that would normally support the title, the CK is effectively challenging the player to wrest control of what once belonged to that title, or at the very least gain land from which to build the title's strength. In this respect, the title becomes as important as the land, because having the title is itself a form of power, a treasure.

THE RANKS OF NOBLES

Some texts attempt to quantify how much land the average noble would possess or pass on in a strict hierarchy of rank. They further attempt to make the King Lord over the Duke and so on down the line. In reality, except where feudalism as a system of government was imposed, this is rarely the case; the true test of rank resides in the system of vassalage as built up over centuries of interacting political machinations. Who has sworn homage or fealty to who is the true mark of the power-ranking, this, and the sheer power the various nobles possess. It is entirely within the realm of possibility that a Duke has not sworn vassalage to any King and though he would not be the social equal of the King, his rank and status are his and his alone, free of any fealty or homage.

The ranking is completely dependent upon the CK and the needs and demands of the game. A Duke or even a Count may rank more actual physical power than a King, though the King retains the title that grants him the most dignified and highest of social rank.

If the CK intends on using land as treasure beyond a simple backdrop treasure, bringing land as treasure into the game will require some leg work and statistics on the lords of the land. In general, the following table lists the ranks of nobles (women and men), and level. These levels represent averages and the CK should alter them or change as they need to. The table is for quick reference only. The noble can be any class but generally are fighter type classes.

LAND AS TREASURE

In **Castles & Crusades**, when awarding land as treasure, the CK must choose one of three methods, or create a hybrid of the three. The first of course is to role play the land as treasure. Note the example above where young Hale gains his title and land. No dice hit the table; the CK determines how much the land is worth and builds it into the structure of the game. Consult **Table 10.2 Land & Title as Treasure** for title, size, the number of men-at-arms it produces and the habitation. The adventure continues, only now the party has a base of operations and the knight Hale is beginning to build a castle. In one swoop the CK uses the profits from the land to build it up.

When using **Table 10.2 Land & Title as Treasure** keep in mind that these are averages and many variables can apply. Further, the awards listed, the recipient holds in direct vassalage to a noble or Lord, meaning they have sworn an oath of fealty or homage. The lands do not come with their own vassals. If the recipient chooses to lease some of his newly acquired lands to a vassal they are perfectly able to do so. To use the table, determine the level of the recipient and cross reference the data given below for average size and occupancy of a fief.

Use **Table 10.3 Land Yields and Obligations** to determine an average yield and obligation that a fief might supply. The Yield refers to money earned above and beyond the expense of running the fief. These include road and bridge maintenance, hiring, training, and paying for men-at-arms (as listed in **Table 10.2**), and normal upkeep for a Manor or Castle. The obligation is an average payment the vassal must make for his service. It is important to note that these are averages only and dependent on the information supplied from **Table 10.2 Land & Title as Treasure**. As discussed, a Duchy can be any size, great or small, and might yield more or less at the Castle Keeper's discretion.

TABLES 10.1 THE FEUDAL HIERARCHY

Title	Level*
Emperor, Empress	25
King, Queen	20
Prince, Princess	18
Duke, Duchess	15
Marquis, Marquess	12
Earl or Count, Countess	9
Viscount, Viscountess	8
Baron, Baroness	6
Baronet, Baronetess	5
Dame (Lady who owns)	4
Chevalier, Lady	4
Chevalier, Lady	3
Squire	1

* This equals the total number of average levels. If the King is a fighter-wizard he should have a maximum of 20 levels combined. For instance, **8th level** fighter and **12th level** wizard. It should be noted that a noble can actually be any level.

TABLE 10.2 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE

Level	Title	Fief*	Occupants**	Men-at-Arms†	Habitation
1	Squire	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
2	Chevalier	.5/1.3	1-10 scattered farms	n/a	n/a
3	Chevalier	1/2.6	4 T	n/a	n/a
4	Dame	1/2.6	4 T, 2 H	4	n/a
5	Baronet	3/8	6 T, 4 H	8	n/a
6	Baron	8/20	8 T, 6 H	14	n/a
7	Baron	32/83	12 T, 4 H, 1 V	26	Manor
8	Viscount	80/208	20 T, 6 H, 4 V	37	Manor, Keep
9	Count	155/401	40 T, 12 H, 8 V	72	Moat & Baily Castle
10-11	Earl	315/815	60 T, 20 H, 6 V	85	Fortified Manor, Castle
12-15	Duke	625/1620	80 T, 40 H, 20 V, 2TW	240	Greater Castle, Castle
16-17	Prince	1250/3235	160 T, 80 H, 40 V, 6TW	520	Greater Castle, Palace
18-20	King	1565/4055	400 T, 200 H, 80 V, 8TW, 1 city	1160	Palace, Fortified City
21-25	Emperor	3125/8095	500 T, 250 H, 100 V, 8TW, 1 met	1485	Fortified City

* Each fief is in square miles and square kilometers

** T = Thorpe; H = Hamlet; V = Village; TW = Town

† Men-at-Arms refer to how many men-at-arms the fief yields on its own resources. Of course the vassal can increase that with other resources.

TABLE 10.3 LAND YIELDS AND OBLIGATIONS

Fief	Annual Yield*	Obligation**
1	175gp	1 Foot Knight, 1 Man-at-Arms†
2	250gp	1 Mounted Knight, 1 Man-at-Arms
3	650gp	1 Mounted Knight, 2 Men-at-Arms
4	750gp	1 Mounted Knight, 4 Men-at-Arms
5	1,000gp	1 Mounted Knight, 2 Light Horseman or 6 Men-at-Arms
6	3,500gp	3 Mounted Knights, 4 Light Horseman or 12 Men-at-Arms
7	8,000gp	6 Mounted Knights, 8 Light Horseman, or 24 Men-at-Arms
8	25,000gp	15 Mounted Knights, 20 Light Horsemen, or 50 Men-at-arms
9	75,000gp	35 Mounted Knights, 50 Light Horsemen, or 100 Men-at-arms
10-11	200,000gp	100 Mounted Knights, 100 Light Horsemen, or 200 Men-at-arms
12-15	700,000gp	250 Mounted Knights, 300 Light Horsemen, or 600 Men-at-arms
16-17	1,500,000gp	500 Mounted Knights, 600 Light Horsemen, or 1200 Men-at-arms
18-20	3,000,000gp	1000 Mounted Knights, 1200 Light Horsemen, or 2500 Men-at-arms
21-25	5,000,000gp	1200 Mounted Knights, 2400 Light Horsemen, or 5000 Men-at arms

* Yield derives from any number of enterprises: firewood, hay, wheat, barley, fruits, cattle, sheep, pigs, mined ore, or even manufactured goods; also taxes on roads, bridges, gate charges, etc. The yield is based on a maximum number of habitations in a fief.

** These obligations are for an average period of 30 days. Payment for them must come from the Yield. These Knights, horseman, and man-at-arms are not equipped with armor, weapons, or horses. The Vassal must equip them from his armory, assuming he has one, and his herd, assuming he has one. The equipment must come from the Yield or other recourses.

†A man-at-arms may be substituted for double the number of Archers.

LAND AS TREASURE PER CLASS

Table 10.2 Land & Title as Treasure is the baseline for any class that earns a fief, and assumes that nobility and the titles of Lord and Vassal are not limited to a soldier's profession. Instead, deeds beyond the sword earn an adventurer rank and title. For those Castle Keepers that wish to preserve the warrior culture of feudalism, the tables and descriptions on the following pages provide guidelines on how to award land as treasure for each class. Each class is different, possessed of a different set of skills, goals, and designs and the setting that you are playing in or have designed may not have room for a druid who has become a fief holding Lord and Vassal.

Fighter

The quintessential adventurer, the fighter is the least specialized and most versatile of all the classes. Their ranks encompass the very spirit of the soldier of fortune and their awards in land as treasure rank as the most simple. The world of the nobleman, the Lord, is open to them as the fighter is the bedrock of that culture. For a standard land as treasure reward for fighters refer to **Table 10.2 Land & Title as Treasure**.

Ranger

Awarding a ranger a fief would only serve to tie them down and perhaps not play to their skills as a Lord would desire. However, there is a constant need for a warden, someone able to watch the roads, keep an eye on strangers who pass through a land. The warden keeps track of the amount of game in an area, when best to hunt, and how best to hunt. Furthermore, they keep a watch out for any monsters that live in the area or may travel through it. Rangers are generally awarded wards to watch over and keep safe for the Lord of the land. As such, they are not required to raise troops, or render obligations. Their oaths of fealty or homage earn them a different reward.

TABLE 10.4 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE: RANGER

Level	Title	Ward*	Huntsmen**	Habitation/Pay†
1	Deerstalker	2/5	0	n/a; 10gp
2	Huntsman	4/10	0	n/a; 25gp
3	Scout	8/20	1	Draw Rations; 40gp
4	Pathfinder	50/130	2	Free Room at Inn; 50gp
5	Sheriff	150/390	4	Free Room and Board at Inn; 65gp
6	Master of the Hunt	500/1295	8	Quartering Anywhere in Realm; 75gp
7	Master of Game	1200/3108	12	Living Quarters in Lord's Castle; 110gp
8	Warden	5000/12950	16	Cottage; 120gp
9	Marshal of the Realm	15000/38850	24	Manor House, 10,000 acre fief; 150gp
10-11	Ranger	30000/77700	36	F. Mn. House, 20,000 acre fief; 200gp
12-15	Ranger Lord	55000/142450	48	Keep, 45,000 acre fief; 300gp
16-18	Ranger Lord	90000/233100	65	Motte-Baily Keep, 90,000 allodial fief; 600gp
19-20	Lord Marshal	150000/388550	85	Castle, 150,000 acre allodial fief; 1200gp
21-24	Lord of Rangers	300000/777000	120	Castle, 300,000 acre allodial fief; 3000gp

* A ward is measured in square miles/kilometers. As a point of reference the state of Arkansas in the United States America is 52,000 square miles.

** These are hireling scouts. They are proficient in 1-2 weapons only.

† This is monthly pay for everyone

Rogue

The rogue is a character whose land for treasure award takes a dramatically different turn from many of the other classes. It is unlikely that they would aspire to, or that a Lord would grant, a traditional fief to such a character.

The rogue is by his nature a dungeoneer, one particularly trained to enter and explore dungeons; hiding in shadows, sneaking through the dark, surprising an enemy, finding and removing traps are all skills of the specialized adventurer. When awarding him land as treasure it is best to look beyond the fief and land and into a realm more specialized. The rogue often works in networks of guilds and deeds, great and small, or in overcoming challenges that allow him to move up and through the hierarchy of rogues. These guilds are often in the employ or at least on the payroll of powerful oligarchs, nobles, ecclesiastics, even other adventurers. They are secretive and their status kept so by those who employ them, assuming, of course, they do not operate on their own, for their own means. In any case, the rogue's guilds are houses that resemble in many ways the fiefs of Lords and Vassals.

The land as treasure award comes in the guise of rank and entry in these guilds and often employment in the most powerful of noble or mercantile houses. The rogue is given his own "fief" to watch over and control. In turn he is granted footpads to work for him and with him.

TABLE 10.5 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE: ROGUE

Level	Rank	Guild Relationship*	Footman	Guild Dividends **
1	Footman	Serve a Hawkshaw	n/a	0
2	Bracer	Serve a Hawkshaw	1-2	5
3	Dunner	Blockhouse	1-2	15gp
4	Scout	City Block	2-4	25gp
5	Hawkshaw	Neighborhood	4-8	50gp
6	Dungeoneer	Serve a Doge	n/a	100gp
7	Goodman	District/Town	8-36	150gp
8	Rogue	Serve a Grand Doge	n/a	200gp
9	Patriarch	Region	12-48	300gp
10-11	Doge	Serve Guild Council	n/a	400gp
12-15	Grand Doge	Guild Council	Whole Guild	500gp
16-18	Master Rogue	Guild Master	Whole Guild	1000gp
19-20	Gorde	Master of Inner Sanctum	Guild & Council	2000gp
21-24	Master Gorde	Guild Lord	All	5000gp

* The guild relationship refers to the area the rogue controls or watches over. At the lower level they are made to serve higher level rogues and carry out their directives. The size of any given area depends upon the size of the city.

** These dividends are paid to the rogue monthly before any guild dues or membership requirements are met.

Assassin

Assassins are very similar to rogues. Working as specialized informants or hired guns, they strive to master their craft and gain rank in the guild hierarchy, or at the very least, if they do not belong to a guild, create a reputation that carries with it high earnings. Their titles all refer to their profession, though not necessarily evil, they do specialize in eliminating difficult and dangerous targets. Their guilds are usually loose and not as structured as is the rogue's; mainly because the very profession these adventurers practice lends itself to the risk of betrayal. The chart below sets out a template for what an assassin might earn from carrying through a task, and what payment he would receive if put on the payroll of a powerful employer.

TABLE 10.6 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE: ASSASSIN

Level	Title	Payment*	Guild rank**	Stipend†
1	Crowbait	5gp	n/a	15gp
2	Candidate	10gp	n/a	30gp
3	Operative	20gp	n/a	45gp/ Apartment
4	Partisan	45gp	n/a	100gp/ Apartment
5	Knell	100gp	Cell Leader	175gp/Small Flat
6	Bane	210go	Cell Leader	250gp/Flat with Servant
7	Hatchet Man	350gp	Pit Boss	475gp/House with 1-4 servants
8	Gatekeeper	700gp	Master	650gp/House with guards
9	Kingmaker	1200gp	Master	1000gp/Manor House
10-12	Master Reaper	3000gp	Master	2000gp/Manor House
13-15	Master Ferryman	7500gp	Master	2500gp/Palace
16-18	Master Gatekeeper	17000gp	Master	3500gp/Palace
19-20	Tothun (Death's Man)	25000gp	Master	4500gp/Palace
21-24	Grand Master	30000gp	Grand Master	8000gp/Palace

*Payment is determined by multiplying the level/HD of the target by the task payment. For instance, an Operative attacking a 4HD ogre would earn 80gp.

**The Guild Rank is very loosely defined. A Cell Leader would command about 1-4 assassins, but a crowbait, candidate, operative, and partisan would not command any, nor have any communication with the upper hierarchy of a guild.

†The stipend refers to a court paid or hired assassin per month or the average dividend a guild pays its members.

Barbarian

The furthest removed from rank and title of any of the adventurers, the barbarian's awards from land as treasure are wide ranging. It is completely within the realm of possibility that a Lord would award them a fief with full honors, eventually rising through the ranks of the nobility to tread the jeweled thrones of the world beneath their booted heels. If this course is followed, refer to **Table 10.2 Land & Title as Treasure.**

If, on the other hand, the Castle Keeper decides to branch out into a more class specific award, consult the chart below. This chart reflects a culture far more savage and based upon the primitive power of the warrior class, his fearlessness, and his ability to encourage men to like minded deeds. The resulting treasure is negligible but few barbarians concern themselves with the wealth of civilized men, for to them fate is the world's unfolding and things come into their possession and leave it with as much ease. His award comes in his ability to enter his local tribal group and raise bands of warriors.

TABLE 10.7 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE: BARBARIAN

Level	Title	Calling*	Offerings**
1	Deerstalker	n/a	0
2	Hunter	n/a	0
3	Warrior	1-4	25gp
4	Sub-Chief	1-8	45gp
5	Shirt Wearer/ Thane	1-10/Seat at Council	65gp
6	Totem Warrior	2-12	130gp
7	Society Chief	2-16	200gp
8	War Chief	4-24/Council Elder	500gp
9	Chief/Jarl	4-32	1000gp
10-12	Warlord	4-80	2500gp
13-15	Elder	10-200/Council Chief	3000gp
16-18	Elder	20-250/Council Chief	3500gp
19-20	Elder	40-300/Council Chief	4000gp
21-24	King/Tribal Chief	The Tribe/Council Chief	5000gp

* It should be kept in mind that much of the barbarian's power resides in their reputation so that much of the awards that come their way are geared to enhance that aspect of their character. The Calling is their recognition by the tribe or group that the barbarian has particular élan on the battlefield and his leadership often yields greater spoils of war.

** Offerings are monthly pledges given to the barbarian by other tribal members; though listed in gold pieces, these are only the value of the offerings but they are more often in the guise of food, horses, equipment, etc. They are incumbent on that warrior being accepted into the tribe. These figures are after any donatives he may have given to his warriors.

Monk

The monk is perhaps the most bold of adventurers. They alone enter combat with no weapons or sorcery beyond those they possessed at birth. Battle is a multi-leveled contest between the monk and their enemy and the monk and themselves. They strive to make their body a weapon, perfecting it as they increase in skill. It is not unreasonable to assume a monk would earn a traditional fief as treasure. In this case, refer to **Table 10.2 Land & Title as Treasure** above. However, monks often have loose associations amongst themselves, clubs, guilds, and orders within which they learn from each other and perfect the art of unarmed combat. These range from the simple fight clubs to the more elaborate religious orders.

TABLE 10.8 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE: MONK

Level	Title	Monks	Order Grants*
1	Pug	0	Room & Board
2	Flyweight	0	Room & Board, 5gp
3	Strong-arm	1-2	Room & Board, 15gp
4	Gladiator	2-4	Entrance to Guild Complex/45gp
5	Initiate of Rites	2-8	Entrance to Inner Complex/95gp
6	Novice of Rites	2-12	Permanent Residence in Order/125gp
7	Master of Rites	2-20	Manor House/200gp
8	Initiate of the Inner Circle	6-36	Join Council/Manor/300gp
9	Novice of the Inner Circle	8-48	Voice on Council/ Manor/400gp
10-12	Master of the Inner Circle	10-60	Head of Couincil/ Manor/600gp
13-15	Elector of Inner Rites	20-80	Master's Circle/ Palace/1000gp
16-18	Elector of Inner Rites	10-100	Voice in Circle/ Palace/1000gp
19-20	Master of Inner Rites	20-200	Order Warlord/Fortified Palace/2000gp
21-24	Master of the Order **	All Present	Master of Guild/ Temple/3000gp

* Payment is a monthly dole handed out by the order for services to and at the temple, guild hall, etc.

** There is generally only one Master of the Order. The change of command either takes place peacefully, or in the case of some orders, through challenge and personal combat.

Wizard/ Illusionist

The Magi, which for our purposes encompasses both the wizard and the illusionist, are uncommon, and as such their talents are highly prized. Often they are members of guilds of like minded magi who draw resources from common pools, such as libraries, apothecaries, and the like. These guilds are closed orders and only the most dedicated are allowed entry. Rising in the ranks of the magi is slow and arduous but in the end pays high dividends.

Above and beyond the guild nobles, lords, oligarchs, and most other creatures of power in any fantasy setting, the magi is most prized. Their wealth of magic is a tool that any court would benefit from. Whether illusionist or wizard, these spell casters are highly sought after and prized members of any retinue.

Each of the following two tables is broken down by Guild affiliation and Court appointed habitation and stipend. Both options, guild and court, can be used together as there is no reason that rising in the ranks of the courtiers would not coincide with a rise in the ranks of the guild. On the other hand, the guild membership would not pertain to a mage that does not belong to a guild.

TABLE 10.9 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE: WIZARD

Level	Title	Guild Benefit*	Courtly Boon
1	Prestidigitator	Library Access	1 Room Quarters; 10gp
2	Theurgist	SG	1 Room Quarters; 25gp
3	Thaumaturge	SG	Apartment, fire place; 35gp
4	Magician	SG	As above, 1 servant; 50gp
5	Comus	SG/Laboratory	As above, Workshop; 75gp
6	Warlock	SG/Quartered	As above, 1 1st lvl mage; 125gp
7	Gramaryian	SG/Apartment	Manor, servants, 1-4 magi (1st-2nd lvl); 300gp
8	Conjurer	SG/1-2 Apprentices	As above; 550gp
9	High Mage	SG/Stipend	Wing of Palace/Castle, 1-4 1st-2nd lvl magi; 1000gp
10-12	Sub-Magus	SG/Wing	As above, 2-8 1st-2nd lvl magi; 1000gp
13-15	Wizard	Guild Leader	Tower & Dungeon, servants, 2-12 magi†; 2500gp
16-18	Magus	Guild Council	Tower & Dungeon, servants, 4-24 magi†; 5000gp
19-20	Arch Magi	Master of Council	Tower & Dungeon, servants, 6-36 magi†; 7500gp
21-24	Arch Mage	Guild Master/ Master	Tower & Dungeon, servants, 12-64 magi†; 10,000gp

* SG: Spell Grant. A spell grant is equal to 1 spell that is one level lower than the wizard's level. For example a Magician that enters the ranks of Comus, moving up from 4th to 5th level, gains one 4th level spell from the Guild. The CK should roll randomly, using the spell lists in the **Players Handbook**.

†These magi vary from 1st to 6th level.

TABLE 10.10 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE: ILLUSIONIST

Level	Title	Guild Benefit*	Courtly Boon
1	Adept	Library Access	1 Room Quarters; 10gp
2	Mystic	SG	1 Room Quarters; 25gp
3	Illusionist	SG	Apartment, fireplace; 35gp
4	Hypnotist	SG	As above, 1 servant; 50gp
5	Psionisist	SG/ Laboratory	As above, Workshop; 75gp
6	Cabalist	SG/ Quartered	As above, servant; 125gp
7	Enchanter	SG/ Apartment	Manor, 1-2 servants, 1-4 magi; 300gp
8	Empath	SG/	As above, 2-8 magi; 550gp
9	Conjurer	SG/ Stipend	Wing of Palace/Castle, 1-4 magi†; 750gp
10-11	Mas. of Phantasm	SG/Wing	As above, 2-8 magi†; 1000gp
12-15	Sorcerer Initiate	SG/Full Guild Access	Tower, servants, 2-12 magi††; 2500gp
16-18	Sorcerer Master	Treasury Access	Tower, servants, 2-12 magi††; 5000gp
19-20	Sorcerer	Access to Arsenal	Tower, servants, 2-12 magi††; 7500gp
21-24	Master of Sorcery	Master of Guild	Palace/Tower, 2-12 magi††; 10000gp

* SG: Spell Grant. A spell grant is equal to 1 spell that is one level lower than the wizard's level. For example, a Hypnotist that enters the ranks of Psionisist, moving up from 4th to 5th level, gains one 4th level spell from the Guild. The CK should roll randomly, using the spell lists in the **Players Handbook**.

†These magi vary from 1st to 3rd level.

††These magi vary from 1st to 6th level.

Cleric

The cleric holds a special place in any region, be it settled or uncivilized. Their relationship to the deity makes their role in society a peculiar one both within and out of the society. Though it is perfectly plausible for a cleric earn a fief as reward and for him to sit with secular titles and power, it is far more beneficial both to the character and to the party if the land for treasure award takes on a shape that reflects the aforementioned special relationship. Clerics earn the right to govern or administer temples and those petitioners who attend them.

TABLE 10.11 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE: CLERIC

Level	Title	Acolytes*	Habitation	St†
1	Suffragan	0	Room	5gp
2	Acolyte	0	Room, Board	7gp
3	Lector	0	Room, Board	10gp
4	Sacrodote	1	Sanctuary, Lesser††	45gp
5	Warden	2	Access to Temple Supplies	60gp
6	Priest	4	Access to Temple Armory	80gp
7	Exarch	6	Sanctuary, Full††	95gp
8	Officiate Priest	8	Private room	105gp
9	Canon	12	Room with chapel	150gp
10-12	Bishop, Cardinal Priest	24	Small Dwelling/Wing	300gp
13-15	Confessor	50	Manor	750gp
16-18	Elder	75	Manor	1500gp
19-21	Heirarch	75	Large Manor	3000gp
22-23	Patriach, Pontiff, H. Priest, Prelate	100‡	Temple	5000gp
24	Apostle	All	Temple Palace	Nil

* The cleric is responsible for outfitting, feeding, and clothing the acolyte.

**Habitation can only be received from the temples of the character's deity or, at the CK's discretion, deities of a related pantheon.

† Stipend or collections are paid to the cleric from the temple coffers and assume the cleric is active in a particular region or area. They are paid monthly and are not cumulative.

††Lesser Sanctuary includes use of the temple ground for the cleric and their comrades for rest and recuperation. Full Sanctuary includes healing, blessings, cure disease and the like.

‡ The number of acolytes is the number of clerics serving in the temple, included with these would be all the lay people in the Temple. In short, the Patriarch is complete Master of the Temple of which he is placed in charge.

Druid

The power of nature is immense and without consciousness. Its power is beyond the understanding of mortals because it is so unadorned with empathy, feeling, or sympathy. But the druid is the focal point of this power in the kingdoms of man, dwarf and elf. For this reason, the druid occupies an utterly unique position amongst the adventuring classes. Title has little meaning, and land ownership is something that this class, though they may understand, rarely have the ability to empathize with. Land ownership is temporary at best. Whatever one builds or hopes for will be ground down by the never ending struggle for suvival.

It is perfectly within the realm of reason that a druid can be granted a fief and title of nobility, and in fact a Lord's reasoning may be sound in doing so, however, it is not the path that the average druid would find rewarding. Instead it is in his interest to gain greater power in his understanding of the natural world and in his ability to protect others from its uncaring but extremely destructive power. To achieve this, the druid needs a place of solitude and quiet.

The druidic grove is just such a place, a temporal realm that channels nature's mindless power into a force more compatible with the empathetic natures of man.

The grove is the druid's holy ground and the center of his power and his ability to grow and advance.

TABLE 10.12 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE: DRUID

Level	Title	Furnishment*	Druidic Grove
1	Initiate	n/a	Draw rations
2	Novice	n/a	Draw rations and arms
3	Mystic	Right of Access**	Sit at Council
4	Flamen	Box of sacred dirt	Participate in Council
5	Epopt	Decanter of sacred water	Call a Council
6	Hieros	Flagon of Air	1-2 Initiates
7	Daduchus	Chest ever burning embers	2-4 Initiates, 1-2 Novices
8	Sagart	Taught spells to make Grove†	1-10 Initiates, 2-4 Novices
9	Ardsagart	Able to Establish Grove	2-16 Initiates, 2-8 Novices
10-12	Hierodule	Able to Furnish Elements	1-20 Initiates, 1-10 Novices
13-15	Arch Druid	Control Multiple Groves	Above, with 1-4 Mystics
16-18	Elder Druid	Master of Arch Druids	Above, with 1-4 Flamen
19-20	Hierophant	Master of the Druidic Sect	All Druids at his command
21-24	Merlin††	Any	All Druids at his command

* These represent the elements necessary to create a druidic grove.

** Access to the Inner Grove is granted.

† These spells are unique to every Grove and sect.

†† There can only be one Merlin in any order.

Knight

Knights possess advantages over all other classes as they are able to establish lands of their own. The class name does not indicate that they are a part of the nobility, but shows they are trained as part of the warrior class of knights that command many realms. They can be ennobled of course, making them Chevaliers. Their renown can attract followers faster of higher quality than all the other classes. The rules for this are set down in the **Players Handbook**, allowing **10th level** Knights to establish themselves, build fortresses, and to attract followers. What this does not allow for, however, is the Knight's position in the aristocracy, unless he enters the ranks of nobles he remains outside the system of patronage that comes with both advantages and disadvantages. Being at the mercy of every powerful Lord in a region is a major disadvantage.

The guidelines set down in **Table 10.2 Land & Title as Treasure** are a perfect starting point for the Knight when dealing with land for treasure. However, the Knight's particular training and background lends him the unique abilities to command armies. His charisma and training combine to make him the perfect master of war and the Knight can earn rank in the armies of a Lord. The rank is incumbent on his swearing homage, as opposed to simple fealty, to the Lord. Below is a list of land as treasure that a Knight may earn above and beyond that set down in the **Players Handbook**.

TABLE 10.13 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE: KNIGHT

Level	Title	Fief	Command	Hospitality**
1	Armiger	*	0	Room & Board
2	Dragoon	*	0	Room & Board
3	Pioneer	*	0	Room & Board
4	Master of Arms	*	1-10 Men-at-Arms	Above, Armory
5	Master of Horse	*	1-10 Horse	3 Man Quarters
6	Master of Siege	*	Small Castle or Wall	3 Man Quarters
7	Master of Battle	*	10-100 Men-at-Arms	Personal Room
8	Knight's Master	*	10-100 Horse	Personal Room
9	Knight's Commander	*	1-10 Knights & their Men	Residence, 500gp
10-12	Knight's Marshal	*	2nd in Command	Residence, 1000gp
13-15	Lord of Hosts	*	1st in Command	Residence, 2500gp
16-18	Lord of Hosts	*	1st in Command	Residence, 3000gp
19-20	Lord of Hosts	*	1st in Command	Residence, 4000gp
21-24	Lord of Hosts	*	1st in Command	Residence, 4500gp

* A Knight's beginning fief is equal to a 4th level fief on **Table 10.2 Land & Title as Treasure**. It comes with all the benefits and obligations listed in that and following tables. For example at **1st-level** a Knight would gain a 640 acre fief. At level 6 it is as **10th-level**, at Level 7 it is as **11th-level** and so on. The fief comes complete with the Title; however, the above indicates that the Knight remains the Lord's Man and as such can never attain a Title higher than that of Viscount (unless of course by other means).

** The Knight is able to board in the Lord's Castle. This is above and beyond any other residence he may have. When at the Castle, the Lord supplies him hospitality: food and a bed. As he advances he earns more personal quarters. The residence and stipend is above and beyond anything gained from the fief.

Paladin

Paladins are the fighting arms of most good religions. They serve as arms bearers for gods and their lives are devoted to protecting the temples, churches, and holy ground of their gods and orders. They do this because they are ennobled of spirit, requiring little in the way of pay or recognition. Unless the circumstances are extraordinary, a Paladin may not swear fealty to a Lord and therefore cannot earn a fief in the traditional sense. If they are awarded a fief, their oaths of fealty or homage must come second to those they have already given to their Order and deities, otherwise they risk of violating their mission and losing their paladinhood. They can of course be awarded ecclesiastical fiefs. These fiefs would resemble those in outlined in **Table 10.2 Land & Title as Treasure**.

Land and control of money is not the paladin's goal. Combating evil and serving the greater good is. The following table outlines what constitutes land for treasure for the paladin.

TABLE 10.14 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE: PALADIN

Level	Title	Sanctuary*	Call Brethren to Arms
1	Yeoman	Claim Refuge	Bear Colors of the Order
2	Steward	With Arms	Temple Guard
3	Gallant	With Arms, Armor	Bear Colors of the Deity
4	Valiant	With above & Horse	1-2 Paladins
5	Hospitiliar	Aid of 1st lvl spells	Temple Kn., Command Temple Guard
6	Champion	Given +1 Weapon	1-4 Paladins
7	Defender	Aid of 1st-2nd lvl spells	1-6 Paladins
8	Justiciar	Aid of 1st-3rd lvl spells	1-8 Paladins
9	Lord Protector	Establish Refuge	2-16 Paladins
10-12	Paladin	Aid of 1st-4th lvl spells	2-24 Paladins
13-15	Lord Paladin	Given Holy Weapon	Paladin Commander
16-18	Pillarist	Protector of Holy Items	Paladin Commander
19-20	Saint	Aid of 1st-4th lvl spells	Paladin Commander
21-24	God's** Arm	Ear of the Gods	Paladin Commander

* Sanctuary is given only in Temples or on Holy Ground that serves the Order and deity of the Paladin. It includes at the very basic levels room and board. If the temple does not have weapons and armor for the Paladin to choose from, they must supply the necessary money to equip him. The Sanctuary offerings are cumulative. The Aid of spells comes from clerics within the Temple itself. The Paladin may command or demand the aid of low level clerics for himself and his men.

** Translate God's Arm to the deity the paladin pays homage to, such as Odin: Odin's Arm.

Bard

The bard's task is that of a story teller. Whether they do this through song, poetry, recitation, or other means is not important, for the method does not detract from the value of the information at the legend master's command. This is often information that both delights and instructs, and as such gains the bard food and drink, a place to lay his head, money for his empty pockets; as well as being summoned by noble lords in order to serve them. The bard would not normally be awarded a fief. His reputation and skills do not lend him to becoming a member of the noble class, though if the CK desires it would certainly not be out of the realm of the possible. Consult the aforementioned **Table 10.2 Land & Title as Treasure** if doing so.

In awarding the bard land for treasure consult the following table. It is designed with the idea that at lower levels the bard's ability to entertain is greater than his value to those who would grant him the benefice of land and its wealth. Once they have gained such recognition they can attract followers of their own, opening a bardic college so long as they have a domicile to house them and instruct them.

TABLE 10.15 LAND & TITLE AS TREASURE: BARD

Level	Title	Earnings*	Followers**
1	Scop	Drink	n/a
2	Fili	Food and Drink	n/a
3	Bragi	Room and Board	n/a
4	Odist	Private Room/ Board/4gp	n/a
5	Skald	Private Room/Board 6gp	n/a
6	Sagaman	Private Room/Board 8gp	n/a
7	Travatore	Private Room/Board 15gp	1 Scop
8	Chronicler	House/25gp	2-4 Scop-Fili
9	Troubador	Small Manor/50gp	2-8 Scop-Bragi
10-12	Minstrel	Fortified Monor/75gp/2 Men-at-Arms	Scop-Odist
13-15	Master Bard	Castle/100gp/2-12 Men-at-Arms	2-16 Scop-Skald
16-18	Chronicler	Castle & Library/125gp	4-24 Scop-Skald
19-20	Mythmaker	Castle & Library/150gp	6-36 Scop-Skald
21-24	Muse	Castle & Library/150gp	School

* Paid per day.

** Followers are always other minstrels and there are always more lower level than high. There must be at least one of the highest level possible in any musical troop or bardic college. Any followers are fed and clothed at the bard's expense.

CREATING THE FEUDAL MODEL

A third method is the most time consuming, though in many ways the most satisfying. The Castle Keeper must sit down and design their own feudal kingdom, complete with titles and their origins; the nature of homage and fealty, what these demand of the vassal and Lord; a political hierarchy wherein the methods of acquiring a title and land are explained and presentable. They must build all this into the campaign arc of the game and present it to the players. It is almost impossible to create a set of rules to follow, but the following guidelines and example may be helpful.

In order to create an effective system, follow these basic guidelines, but always remember that the power is based upon the ownership of land and the title that that ownership grants:

1) **History.** Develop a history for the region grounding it several hundred years in the past. This allows for precedents to be set and allows a realistic frame within which to build

a wide variety of Lord to Vassal relationships, from the landless Duke to the knight errant who inherits an Earldom.

2) **Find a center.** It is best to start with an Emperor or King, as these figures will command the most power and give a broader scope. If the design calls for a smaller political entity, keep in mind that at some point in the feudal hierarchy a King will be called for, as no Duke would remain a Duke if King were possible. Of course this does not preclude creating a setting wherein the King is missing or his line has died out.

3) **Create the feudal hierarchy.** Make certain that there are some loose rules governing the nature of vassalage and what it entails. This allows you to quickly tackle any problems that might arise from play or design. Consult **Table 10.1 The Feudal Hierarchy** above. It is not necessary to have all the titles included in the setting. Use the ones most fitting to your design. Keep in mind that in C&C there are a multitude of classes that thrive on different rewards so try not to restrict the rank of Lord or even Vassal to the knight, fighter, and paladin classes. In a world of magic, the power of a wizard can be more devastating than that of a knight. The vassalage may come with an obligation to serve as Court Mage 25 days out of the year.

4) **Entry Points.** To actually be able to award Land as Treasure make certain there are entry points for the characters and/or party. Making a feudal society requires too many hurdles to gain nobility will shut out your players and drive them away from the setting. Make certain that the setting can accommodate almost any class as noted above.

The following is an example of a feudal structure designed for the world of Aihrde. It traces the (re)creation of the Empire of Aenoch after the Winter Dark Wars.

Example Feudal Structure

Pryzmira stood as heir to the Imperial throne of Aenoch. In a few short years she came of age and when she learned of her heritage, she declared she would seek her throne, even though none of her lands remained intact. Her family's empire had been destroyed a thousand years ago by the Horned God, Unklar, and he ruled an Empire that dominated the known world for all those years. The Winter Dark Wars threatened to bring his realm to an end.

The Winter Dark Wars raged across Aihrde for two decades. Everywhere men waited to see which way the wars would go, but after the great battle of Olensk, it seemed obvious. Pryzmira knew she had but to find the right allies to support her claim. She found them in the lands south of Aufstrag in the Kellerwald. The Duchies of Aesperdi, Dundador, Kourland, Barachia and Meteira along with the city-states of Heimstadt and Vilshofen; they all had lived under the shadow of Aufstrag. These duchies and cities predated the Winter Dark era, counting themselves as the old aristocracy of the Aenochian Empire. They grew wealthy through control of the overseas trade routes and they suffered little from the hand of Unklar. In consequence, a powerful, educated merchant class came to rule these cities and states. When war came to Unklar's capital and it seemed his fall a certainty, these lords and Burghers banded together in a loose confederation and prepared to rebel.

Pryzmira, last daughter of the House of the Old Empire of Aenoch, came to them and promised the wealth and power of the Council of Light (those forces that fought Unklar) if they would support her claim to the ancient lineage. She bore the Mark of her house and they believed her. They agreed to league with Pryzmira under the stipulation that she award each of the Duchies and the city states the rights to elect the Empress and her heirs to the throne. In turn, she demanded that their borders be permanently fixed, that they give her the city of Ascalon to rule from, and that they grant her wide privileges of taxation and expansion.

In 1030md, the provinces and cities declared themselves against Aufstrag and invited Pryzmira to rule them. Aufstrag had no strength left to combat this final blow to her prestige, so the rebellion went unchallenged. The war raged on for another 10 years. At last in 1040md, the Electors crowned the 30 year old Pryzmira Empress of Aenoch, by placing the Cunae Mundus Usquam, the "Cradle of the World," upon her head.

In short, the constitutions drawn up were these: The military and mercantile alliance of the cities and provinces of New Aenoch granted their support and elected Pryzmira Empress after she conceded the following: 1. Pryzmira recognized the territorial rights of the League members and agreed to the investiture of Ducal authority for each territory with subsequent rights given to the Lord, including justice, maintenance of troops, and taxation. 2. Pryzmira recognized the rights of the City Burghers and Lords to choose the successor from their own number to each Ducal throne. 3. Pryzmira agreed to support the League militarily, maintaining the League's mercantile rights. 4. Pryzmira agreed to support a general free trade throughout the League 5. Pryzmira agreed to maintain an army from her own expenses to act as protection of the League and "Empire". She agreed that the Imperial army would not be used but for extreme purposes within the territories of the League itself. The members agreed to supply 500 well equipped men-at-arms in support of the Imperial Army for a period of 40 days each year or in the advent of no troops being available to supply monies to hire mercenaries.

In turn the League bestowed the crown of Aenoch upon Pryzmira's brow and installed her as their new Empress. They gave her lands surrounding the city of Ascalon to support her household. In Ascalon, a castle and tower were built for her at the League's expense. Furthermore, she was given all rights of taxation upon the roads and rivers and sea ports (this last only upon non-League members). At last the Imperial House gained sole rights to the minting of coins and the status and conquest of territory they left to the Empress's judgment.

In this manner, Pryzmira came to rule the New Empire, though in truth hers was but a shadow of her ancestor's power. For many years she strove to combat the Dukes and gain leverage over them. This led to many internal conflicts and the slow evolution of a complicated feudal system. Pryzmira introduced the cult of Toth to the realm to vie for the souls of the common men. Only a few converted, and mostly those possessed of great wealth.

As she grew older the Empress mollified her demands and rarely struggled with her Dukes. She turned instead to conquering new land and in this vein called to the west for a crusade, promising land and wealth. The summons generated wide enthusiasm in the west and hosts of men came to carve holdings for themselves. Through the right of conquest, the Empress possessed a hidden power, for it was hers to create a whole new class of vassals that held their power and rights directly from her and owed her homage and fealty. A host of

new, small, holdings sprang up upon her borders, knights sworn to her for the properties they conquered but she owned. In time, she realized that these vassals would prove amazingly powerful counterweights to the seven lords.

Creating your own feudal system and region can be both fun and satisfying. Though it is a great deal of work, if the CK can coax the players into such complicated adventure tapestries it is well worth the time.

PITFALLS

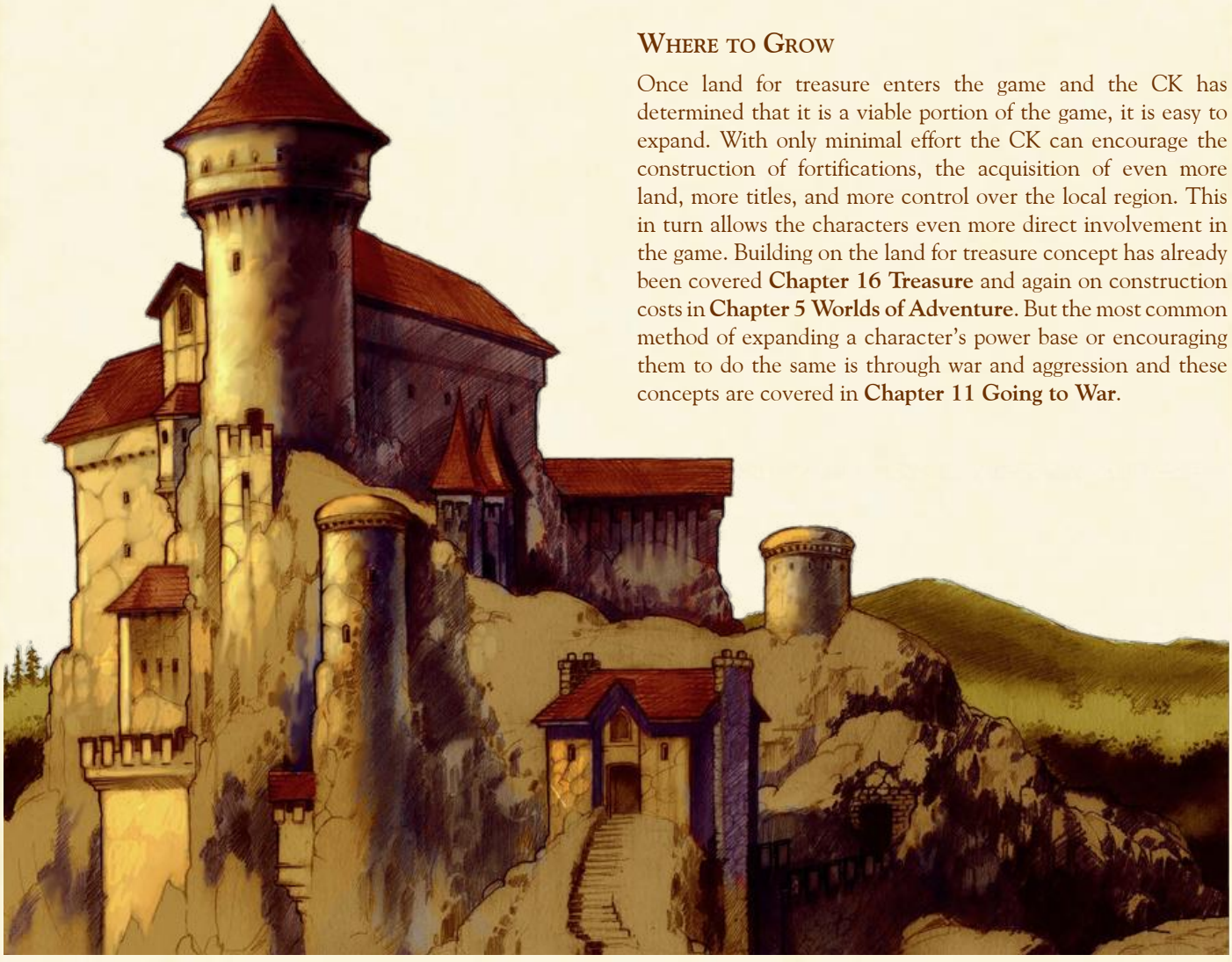
There are two common pitfalls that come with awarding land as treasure. The first is the attitude modern players have for ancient and aristocratic systems, and the second is a tendency for the CK to turn the game into one of papers and paychecks.

The most common pitfall comes from the very background the vast majority of **C&C** players come from, our constitutionally guaranteed rights. We take it for granted inherent freedoms of speech and have a great deal of trouble empathizing with stratified cultures. This is particularly true with cultures based on military exploits. In a feudal environment, it is not natural intelligence that propels you forward, though this can help, but rather martial prowess. It goes against our grain to recognize aristocratic privilege. The CK must simply remind the characters gently at first that they are misplaying their characters. In the society they are living in, they would have no concept of freedom of speech; in fact, being mouthy to a noble with a greater vassalage than they possess would be a completely foreign concept. If they persist, have the Lord show his power through force or magic, reminding the character that they are not the dominant force in the room. If they persist, marshal the King's vassals and punish the character most terribly.

An equally common pitfall emanates from the Castle Keeper. In attempting to create a believable, real setting, the CK tends to go overboard with bookkeeping. Marking down how many bushels of grain a region or town is able to harvest in X weather is not helpful to the flow of a fun and adventuresome game. It is a natural tendency in the CK to attempt to establish rates of taxation and the like, but the CK should make careful note of the players' attitude. If in the course of a description, one of your players is asleep, another is counting the popcorn bubbles in your dining room ceiling and two of them are playing dice games, it is best to back off the book keeping and get back to dragon slaying.

Where to Grow

Once land for treasure enters the game and the CK has determined that it is a viable portion of the game, it is easy to expand. With only minimal effort the CK can encourage the construction of fortifications, the acquisition of even more land, more titles, and more control over the local region. This in turn allows the characters even more direct involvement in the game. Building on the land for treasure concept has already been covered **Chapter 16 Treasure** and again on construction costs in **Chapter 5 Worlds of Adventure**. But the most common method of expanding a character's power base or encouraging them to do the same is through war and aggression and these concepts are covered in **Chapter 11 Going to War**.



CHAPTER 11 – GOING TO WAR

The war horn sounds its howl across terrain crawling with thousands of armored combatants, and reverberates off the walls of the ancient sorcerer's keep. Lightning bolts and exploding balls of arcane fire tear into the lines as clouds of arrows rise and fall with scythe-like precision. This is the footage burned into our brain when we read a work of fantasy fiction or see an epic film of high fantasy. Culturally, we come to expect such scenes in our fantasy role-playing games, but often as not, many new players leave the gaming table with a mild tinge of disappointment after hearing about the king's great battle but not being able to involve their characters in it.

They may ask the Castle Keeper running their game, "Why didn't we get to fight in the great battle against the orc horde of Yorgach the Ravager?"

Such questions often leave the CK with an equal amount of frustration. Of course the players should have had an opportunity to go to war and fight for their kingdom or country. Unfortunately, in most game systems, the Game Master's answer is usually, "I don't have rules to allow you to do that."

Luckily, the unifying Siege Engine mechanic of **Castles & Crusades** provides very simple solutions for resolving the mass combat mechanic with only a small amount of prep work. Through this use of the Siege Engine, Castle Keepers can easily transform a story about a battle taking place in the periphery of their campaign into an event that is at the front and center of an adventure. Better than that, this expansion of the Siege Engine does something that other mass combat systems fail to do: It allows the player characters to remain player characters and do the things that adventurous and heroic player characters do in their ordinary game!

THE INEVITABILITY OF WAR

The condition of war occurs when a nation, group, tribe, or culture brings its will with violent military force upon another for the purposes of control, power, protection, or plunder. The reasons are many, and some are good, and some are bad; but ultimately, they end with warriors on a battlefield fighting to the death until one side surrenders or is destroyed.

In the fantasy genre, the reasons for warfare are often clear to see. The fantasy world overflows with chaos, evil, and strife. Hordes of humanoid beast-men, driven by evil and often arcane forces, plague the world. Villains amass large armies, or wield great magical powers with which to harass the innocent with brutal violence. Fortresses and walled settlements rise up to defend against their incursions. Heroes rise to defend the common folk against these evil forces. Conversely, in a setting

where the "heroes" are actually "the bad guys," it is as likely they will wish to punish civilization for its misdeeds, or simply plunder it for its monetary value and arcane wealth.

Characters could find themselves embroiled in such conflicts at any time, or their own actions may be the catalyst for large battles. Perhaps they undertake the task to build a fortress upon the marches of a once-great kingdom, charged with clearing the area of its known foes. In such events, surgical strikes by small bands of adventurers may not be the best course of action. The muster goes out, and soldiers trained or hired to fight the foes dwelling along the dark edges of the map quickly respond to the call.

Without a doubt, at some point in their adventuring careers, the characters will become embroiled in a war.

ROLE-PLAYING WAR

A war the characters start, or one they participate in, offers the CK a unique opportunity to advance the game in new directions, rapidly and forcefully. Furthermore, the battlefield offers the players a chance to be truly heroic, often fighting for something more than short-term treasure goals or long-term level gains. Bringing war into play is desirous and often necessary. To allow the characters to stride through that valley of chaos that is war, either as leaders of large armies, partisans of small ones, or members of someone else's band, makes no difference. The sheer whirling madness of hundreds, if not thousands of men encased in iron and wading through pools of blood struggling over a stretch of ground is enough to raise the ire of any gamer.

Any combat, especially at high levels, can become complicated. Moves, countermoves, spells, armor class, damage of various weapons, reach, character abilities, monster stats, and more all play a role in individual combat. These same factors play out in large-scale battles, as well; however, they are multiplied by the number of combatants, ranging from small bands to gigantic armies. Keeping track of it all is difficult for the CK but even harder for the players to follow. Generally, the sheer act of staying alive engages most of the players' attention, attempting to follow a right flank infantry phalanx's attempt to form up in a refuse left formation to combat a worg cavalry charge is not something they are going to readily do.

In order to role-play large combat effectively, the CK must engage the players at some level, allowing them to wade through the combat, engaging this enemy or that while maintaining a broad descriptive text. Too often, Castle Keepers become embroiled in long descriptions in which the characters must listen to the ebb and flow of the encounter, large or small, as a pupil does a teacher. Though that might work in school, it does not work at the gaming table. Players readily become bored and tend to block out anything not pertaining to the immediate ground around their characters.

If the Castle Keeper has pre-determined the battle's outcome, give the characters heroic moments of personal combat. Medieval battlefields do not resemble modern battlefields where long-range combat is the norm and a vast array of communication hubs allows soldiers to react to immediate dangers. Medieval battlefields comprised masses of men combating one another, on a very personal level, face to face. Though certain types of battles, such as the phalanx battle, consisted of organized bodies of men pushing one another, they all boiled down to men with swords and shields forced, at some point, to slay their enemy close up.

With this in mind, role-playing battles is rather easy. After brief descriptions of this flank moving there, archers shooting here, cavalry riding down this wing, or whatever is occurring on the field, turn immediately to the players and engage them by allowing them to roll initiative and swing and hack through the combat as normal. It's important to note that these individual battles occur in the swirling mass of large-scale battles, and they do not have to end with one or the other being killed. By applying these simple principles, one can engage players in large-scale combat without actually running the large-scale combat.

1) **Keep it Brief:** The descriptions of the mass combat should be brief and brutal. Capture the moment in a few sentences, and then immediately turn to the players to find out what they are doing in the combat. Come back to these descriptions often, but keep them brief.
2) **Run a Normal Round:** Run the round as you normally would, engaging players and finding out what their characters are doing or want to do. Between players, insert short descriptions of the mass combat taking place around them.
3) **Constant Movement:** Allow the swirl of combat to pull an opponent away from a character and another come up against the character. This helps the player live in the madness of the moment, as the struggles against one or the other opponent ebb and flow with the fortunes of war.
4) **Death Comes Quickly:** Do not become too concerned about the hit points of the characters' opponents. In the mass battle, it's not the personal kill that matters. If the character rolls a natural 20 or does massive damage, allow the opponent to die quickly. This helps players stay in the moment by avoiding a long, expansive duel with one opponent as the battle continues around them.
5) **Allow for Spells:** Spellcasters can cause massive damage to an enemy's army. Understand the nature of the party's spellcaster before you begin the battle and plan for it. If the party's wizard can cast 7 fireball spells in the course of the battle, make the army large enough to sustain the spells or suffer a short-lived battle. However, do not be afraid to allow the spellcaster to blast giant holes in the enemy's army. If you have pre-determined the battle's outcome, do not fear the loss of a few troops.
6) **Keep it Going:** Return to Number One above, providing short, brutal descriptions of the mass combat.

Role-playing a mass combat can be extremely fun and need not be as time-consuming as actually running a mass-combat battle. Keeping the players engaged is the key to the whole experience. This must be complemented with vivid descriptions and the CK's constant attention to the players and their role in the unfolding battle. However, if a more direct approach is desired, one in which the players and the CK command the actual armies and the dice and tactical skills determine the results of the battle, the following rules offer everything the CK needs.

COMBAT ON A GRAND SCALE

Like their historical counterparts, fantasy battles breed legendary tales and legendary figures, where heroes stand strong in a whirlwind of blood and iron. For those Castle Keepers who want more direct expression of combat use of the SIEGE Engine, with small modifications, the following system offers exciting, fast-paced mass-combat solutions which can be played out as quickly and efficiently as standard combat, and enjoyed in a single gaming session.

Mass combat rules are for any situation in which a simulation of battle between hundreds or even thousands of combatants is required. In order to simulate the effects of mass combat incorporating battles with such large numbers using the SIEGE Engine, the Castle Keeper need only use the following multipliers to represent greater numbers of foes on the battlefield.

UNIT HIT POINTS

Mass combat introduces a new hit point type, Unit Hit Points (UHP), which helps Castle Keepers and players more easily track troop damage.

Calculating Unit Hit Points

To calculate Unit Hit Points, take one individual from a unit and determine its maximum hit points, based upon its hit dice (HD) or its class, if applicable. Use Table 11.1: Size Multipliers for Unit Points to determine the unit's size multiplier, then use Table 11.2: Members to Unit Squad Ratio to determine the number of individuals comprising a squad. Multiply the maximum hit points calculated earlier by the unit's size multiplier from Table 11.1, then multiply this result by the ratio determined in Table 11.2. This equation assumes for mass combat purposes that individuals comprising the unit have maximum hit points. It works for infantry, missile units, aerial units, and rabble.

Cavalry and aerial wings use a slightly different formula. To calculate Unit Hit Points of a cavalry or air wing unit, take one individual and his mount from a unit and determine the maximum hit points of each, based upon Hit Dice (HD) or class, if applicable. Use **Table 11.1: Size Multipliers for Unit Points** to determine the unit's size multiplier, based upon the size of the mount, then use **Table 11.2: Members to Unit Squad Ratio** to determine the number of individuals comprising a squad. Add the maximum hit points of the mount and rider together and multiply the result by the size multiplier from Table 11.1, rounding up the total. Then multiply this total by the ratio determined in Table 11.2. This equation assumes for mass combat purposes that individuals comprising the unit have maximum hit points and supersedes the equivalent version given in the 1st printing of **Fields of Battle**. The correction is in where to round the answer.

Standard Formula: Maximum hit points of one individual x the **Table 11.1** result x the **Table 11.2** result.

Cavalry/Air Wing Formula: Total combined maximum hit points of one mount and rider x the **Table 11.1** result, rounded up the total, x the **Table 11.2** result.

The relationship between the size of a unit and its members is expressed as a simple ratio. For hero units, that ratio is 1:1, meaning the unit is comprised of 1 member. For the members-to-unit ratios of other squads, the squad members' actual physical size affects the number present in the unit. For instance, a squad comprised of small creatures has a 10:1 ratio. **Table 11.2** provides more ratios by squad size. For simplicity's sake, it is best for CKs to only include like-sized creatures in a squad.

TABLE 11.1: SIZE MULTIPLIERS FOR UNIT HIT POINTS

Size	Multiplier
Small:	x 1/3
Medium:	x 1/2
Large:	x 2/3

TABLE 11.2: MEMBERS-TO-UNIT SQUAD RATIO

Members' Size	Members-to-Unit Ratio
Large	2 to 1
Medium	5 to1
Small	10 to 1
Single Hero	1 to 1

The squad sizes given are the basic sizes for running mass combat using the SIEGE Engine; they may be increased by greater multipliers to reflect larger scale battles. For a quick-and-dirty game, each time the troop ratio doubles, have the unit's damage dealt on a successful attack double, as well. Otherwise, saves, special attacks, and other special abilities remain virtually the same as they do in a standard **Castles & Crusades** game.

UHP Calculation Examples

The CK determines a squad of goblin spearmen's Unit Hit Points as follows:

Base HP =d6 or 6 for common goblins

Size Modifier = x1/3 for small creatures, so 6x1/3 =2

Members in Unit =10 for small creatures

Unit HP =10x2=20 Unit Hit Points

The unit retains the same movement, armor class, and damage, and special abilities as goblins described in **M&T**.

Similarly, a unit of human archers calculates its Unit Hit Points as follows:

Base HP =1d10 or 10 for **1st level** fighters

Size Modifier = x1/2 for medium-sized creatures, so 10 x 1/2 =5

Members in Unit = 5 for medium creatures

Unit HP = 5x5=25 Unit Hit Points.

Again, the unit retains the same movement, armor class, damage, and special abilities as a **1st level** human fighter.

Finally, using ogre clubbers as an example, the CK determines Unit Hit Points as follows:

Base HP = 4d8 or 32

Size Modifier = x 2/3 for large creatures, so 32 x 2/3 = 21.3 or 22 (rounded up)

Members in the Unit = 2 large creatures

Unit HP = 2 x 22 = 44 Unit Hit Points

Again, the unit has the same movement, armor class, damage, and special abilities as the ogre's description in **M&T**.

Cavalry UHP Examples

The CK would calculate the UHP of a squad of **1st level** knights mounted on medium warhorses as follows:

Base HP = d10 or 10 max for **1st level** knight + 3d10 or 30 max for a medium warhorse, for a total of 40.

Size modifier = x 2/3 for large-sized mount, so 40 x 2/3 = 26.6, rounded up to 27.

Members in unit = 2, as the largest size in the unit are the horses.

Unit HP = 2 x 27=54.

Goblin archers mounted on worgs would calculate their UHP as below:

Base HP = d6 or 6 (goblins) + 4d8 or 32, for a total of 38.

Size modifier = x1/2 as worgs are medium-sized mounts, so 38 x 1/2 = 19.

Members in Unit = 5, as the largest size in the unit are the worgs.

Unit HP = 19 x 5 = 95

TROOP TYPES

In a basic land-based game, troops are broken down into the following formations, whose squads and units are comprised of like individuals geared and armed in basically the same manner. **Fields of Battle** provides details on the unit types' functions.

Infantry

Also known as foot soldiers or grunts, Infantry is the most common troop type on the battlefield. Organized by weapon type and similar abilities, Infantry units are the core of any army. Unit attacks are the same as melee attacks in a standard C&C combat encounter, including charges or setting to receive charge attacks.

Missile Units

Missile units include archers, slingers, crossbowmen, and other units with ranged weapons. Missile units typically wear light armor so they can carry extra ammunition. Missile units can make special attacks, such as indirect fire, which affect large areas of the battlefield

Cavalry

Cavalry includes any troops on the battlefield who are mounted on beasts such as horses, worgs, or other mountable creatures. Specialized mounted combatants, such as dragon riders, typically fall into the function of hero units, yet their hit points are determined using the cavalry's UHP method. Because of the speed and devastating abilities generally possessed by even low-level cavalry units, cavalry is greatly feared on the battlefield.

In general, cavalry squads are counted at their mounts' size ratio and speed. Knights on horseback, for instance, use the large-sized ratio (2:1) due to their mounts' size, while goblins on worgs use the medium-sized ratio because worgs are medium-sized creatures.

Some monster races are known to ride worgs, dire wolves, and even dire boars into battle as mounts. These creatures make great cavalry mounts due to their size, speed, and viscous attacks.

A cavalry unit or aerial wing's UHP are determined using the formula given in the Calculating Unit Hit Points on the previous page.

A cavalry unit's AC is the average AC of the mount and rider. Its movement rate is equal to the mount's movement rate. This movement rate may be adjusted based on the weight of barding and the rider's armor.

Cavalry units add the riders' HD and the mounts' HD together to determine the HD bonus for their base morale score. For example, the knight on the heavy warhorse would have a +5 morale score (1 HD for the knight + 4 HD of the heavy warhorse=5).

Cavalry Attacks

Cavalry units engaging in hand-to-hand melee use the attack bonus of the rider, and they deal whatever damage the rider deals + 1 die of damage equal to the mount's most damaging attack. For example, a 1st-level knight mounted on a heavy warhorse has an attack bonus of +0 (modified to +1 for strength), and

deals 1d8+1 points of damage with her lance. Targets take an additional 1d6+3 points of damage from the heavy warhorse's hoof attack.

Any special attacks offered the mount or the rider apply as normal when used as an attack action.

Special: Mounted archers may move half their distance and fire as a normal combat action. While firing, mounted archers do not deal additional damage for the mount. They do, however, deal any potential additional damage when engaged in melee and using melee weapons.

Hero Units

High-level player characters, NPCs, and large monsters such as dragons, qualify as hero units due to the extreme amounts of damage they can do over a broad area of the battle terrain. Heroes are a 1 to 1 ratio.

Typically, heroes face off against other heroes on the battlefield, however situations may arise where the hero is directly assaulted by one or more enemy units. In this circumstance, the hero directly faces the direct ratio/number of individuals comprising the encountered units. Thus, a hero unit coming into contact with a squad of orcs (medium-sized creatures) faces 5 orcs. A hero unit encountering a squad of goblins (small-sized creatures) faces 10 goblins, and so on.

In this situation, the CK can have the hero face the foes as per the standard SIEGE Engine rules, or, using *Fields of Battle*, implement the Squad Formations special rules. Units in squad formations receive attack and damage bonuses against heroes. Squad formations are only used for small- and medium-sized units battling heroes. Large units, which consist of two troops, cannot fight in squad formation, so they battle hero units via the standard SIEGE Engine rules.

With Squad Formations, fighters with Combat Dominance or Extra Attack may use these abilities when fighting units, just as they would in standard SIEGE Engine combat. So, a high-level fighter with initiative over a weaker squad should have no problem in defeating the squad quickly or at least forcing a morale check!

In more advanced mass combat games, lower level NPCs or characters of any level may embed themselves with a similar unit type, using their special abilities, such as spells, as they normally would. Heroes embedded in this manner use their particular level and skill to boost the strength of the unit with which they are embedded. For more on embedded Heroes, refer to **Castles & Crusades Fields of Battle™**.

Rabble

A rabble comprises any force of untrained combatants, such as peasants, urban mobs, slaves, or other civilians pressed into combat. A rabble still falls into the same ratio category as any other combat force; however, the rabble cannot enter into any specific battle formations or perform any trained combat actions.

Rabble units use the standard formula for calculating Unit Hit Points. Human commoners typically have a HD of 1d4 for the purposes of calculating UHP. Their armor class and weapons depend on whatever they have on hand or have been outfitted with. Rabble units are unsteady in combat and have a morale of +0.

Standard Human Unit Samples

Sample unit stat blocks for generating your own armies and keeping track of their abilities are provided below.

Human Longbowmen (Fighter 1)

Size/Ratio: Medium/5:1

HD/UHP: 1d10/UHP 25

Move: 30 ft.

AC: 14 (Studded leather armor + 1 Dexterity)

Attacks/Attack Bonus: Longbow (1d6+1)/+3 AB or Short Sword (1d6)/+1 AB

Squad Formation: HP 8, Longbow (1d6+6)/+8 AB or Short Sword (1d6+5)/+6 AB

Special: Weapon Specialization (Longbow, +1 hit/damage) Combat Dominance; Dexterity 13

Saves/Primes: Strength, Dexterity, Wisdom

Face: 10 ft.

Morale: +1

Spells/Spell-Like Abilities: None

Human Heavy Cavalry (Knight 1)

Size/Ratio: Large/2:1

HD/UHP: 1d10 plus 4d10 (heavy warhorse)/66 UHP

Move: 50 ft.

AC: 16 (17) (Full Chain Suit, Shield)

Attacks/Attack Bonus: Heavy Lance or Longsword (1d8 + Hoof (1d6+3))/+1 AB

Squad Formation: NA

Special: Horsemanship (Deflect, Cover, Fall Softly, Leap, Charge), Inspire +2 to 12 persons, triple damage lance charge; Charisma 16

Saves/Primes: Charisma, Strength, Constitution

Face: 10 ft. (1 inch)

Morale: +1

Spells/Spell-Like Abilities: None

Human Rabble (Commoner 1)

Size/Ratio: Medium/5:1

HD/UHP: 1d4/13 UHP

Squad Formation: HP 3, +5 AB, Weapon +4 damage

Move: 30ft.

AC: 11

Attacks/Attack Bonus: Spear (1d6)/+1 AB

Special: Rabble cannot form complex formations. Rabble units have notoriously poor morale when faced with heavily armed opponents; they have a +0 morale score.

Saves/Primes: Strength, Constitution, Dexterity

Face: 10 ft. (1 inch)

Morale: +0

Spells/Spell-Like Abilities: None

MOVEMENT AND SCALE

Battlefield Scale

Normally, 1 tabletop inch represents 10 feet when operating on the squad scale. For simplicity's sake, unit movement, facing, range, and magical effects are all converted to inches. These inches may be as large as you wish, but should be no smaller than 10 ft. For movement rates, allot one inch for every 10 feet of movement speed the unit possesses. For instance, a kobold unit's movement rate of 30 feet would equal 3 inches of movement on the battlefield.

Terrain conditions like hedgerows, soft ground, sand, or magical conditions may affect the movement rate of units on the battlefield. Such modifiers to the movement rate are dependent upon scenario descriptions of the battlefield map or conditions that arise during the course of a battle, such as via magical effects. When used against large forces, where the platoon is the standard, the change in number of individuals affects the Unit Hit Points of the force, so the damage from the magical effect remains consistent.

Range and Scale

Ranges for missile attacks, ranged spells, and spell effects should be converted to 1 inch per 10 feet of range. Note, when playing larger scale battles, the maximum range and area of effect for spells and missile weapons remain as per their spell description. In other words, a fireball has a 40-foot diameter regardless of the change in face to units due to greater numbers of individuals.

Elevation

For bow and crossbow attacks, add 10 feet to the range increment for every 20 feet of elevation, up to 60 feet maximum. Thus, an archer with a longbow (range increment 100 feet) standing atop a 20-foot-high bastion increases the range increment with the longbow to 110 feet. If the archer were in a 60-foot-tall tower, the range increment would increase to 130 feet. The archer's longbow distance cannot be increased farther than 130 feet by elevating himself more than 60 feet.

Incline

Moving up an incline causes attackers to suffer a reduction in their speed. Moving down an incline causes no penalties to movement. See **Table 11.3: Terrain Movement Effects** for penalties to moving up an incline.

Defending an embankment or incline offers the defender a +1 to hit due to the height advantage over an opponent. Even without the speed reduction, being on high ground is preferable in battle.

TABLE 11.3: TERRAIN/MOVEMENT EFFECTS

Crossing Trench/Ditch:	½ Movement.
Lightly Wooded Terrain:	½ Movement (Elves/Halflings move at ¾ speed).
Wet/Swampy Ground:	¼ Movement.
Hill or Grade:	-5ft. per 10-degree grade; maximum penalty of ¼ speed and 45-degree grade.
Spiked Hill or Grade:	As per hill; combatants suffer 1d4 points of damage per 10 feet of movement.

MOVEMENT ACTIONS

A commander may order the following actions as non-combat movement actions.

Enter Formation: A group of similar squads or units may spend a round getting into combat or marching formations.

Double Time: Troops may move double their movement speed across unimpeded terrain.

Climb: Any movement requiring troops to pass over trenches, ditches, or hedgerows requires the unit to scale the terrain obstacle. Getting across or to the top of the obstacle requires one round per 10 feet.

Rally: All like units return to formations, forming "whole" units from wounded ones.

Forage: Units ordered to forage might scavenge the battlefield and the dead for arrows, weapons, equipment, potions, rations, and the like.

Heal: Where a sufficient number of healers, potions, or other healing methods are available, troops hold their formation and take healing and libations.

COMBAT

In general, combat is resolved similarly to standard combat using the SIEGE Engine rules. Initiative is rolled, movements and positions are taken, and attacks and counter attacks are made. Combat is resolved by making attack rolls for individual squads, platoons, companies, or larger units versus targets who they threaten. If a platoon of 10 squads makes an attack, it is far simpler to roll just one attack roll for all 10 squads. A successful hit damages all opponents whose armor class may be struck and who are within range of the platoon's attack. In the case of melee attacks, that means all foes within melee range of the attacking force.

Charges, magical bonuses, special attacks, and missile attacks all take place normally, with few differences other than morale and scale. Elevation, weather, cover, and other terrain factors are the same as in standard SIEGE Engine combat.

As mentioned earlier, CKs can handle hero-versus-unit combat by having the hero unit face the number of individuals indicated in the unit's size, but Squad Formation, with the units swarming the hero, is outlined in **Fields of Battle's Chapter 5: Heroes at War.**

An example of combat involving large-scale units (from *Fields of Battle*) is included in this chapter. See **A Combat Sequence in Action** for an example of how mass combat works.

Initiative

Initiative is decided with a roll of a d10, with the highest roll taking initiative. However, battlefield units add their battlefield commander's charisma modifier, if any, to their initiative. This benefit reflects their commander's strength in leading and inspiring the troops. Hero units (including NPCs and the PCs) do not gain this bonus on the battlefield, and they roll their own initiative, acting on their own turn, just as they would during a normal combat round. This reflects the battlefield importance of heroes. The heroes' actions take place just as they would when using the normal SIEGE Engine rules. In the event of an initiative tie, heroes always go before combat units. All other units re-roll.

Initiative Example: War-clan leader Wrothgar Yimmyrsclaw of the Frostbone Clan leads his barbarian horde (army) against their mortal enemies, the ice ghouls of the White Wastes. His opponent is the Ghoul Lord Issavul. Wrothgar has a +1 charisma bonus, and his foe, Issavul, has a +2. Issavul gets a modified 6 and Wrothgar a modified 4 on a 10-sided die. Issavul wins initiative for his army, so the ghouls act before Wrothgar's men. Wrothgar has two heroes on his side, they being his twin son and daughter, Kulung and Uma. Their initiative scores are 3 and 8, respectively. Issavul has one hero, a remorhaz, and it scores a 4 initiative.

As the battle commences, Uma takes the first action, followed by Issavul's entire force, except for his remorhaz hero, who acts after Issavul's forces. Next, Wrothgar's forces attack, and then Kulung takes his action at the end of the battle round.

Battlefield Commanders

Forces larger than individual squads need commanders to give orders and focus their attacks. Commanders are generally NPCs who are mid- to high-level versions of the troops they command. For example, the commander of a company of swordsmen is generally a renowned, skilled swords master, and an expert archer often leads other elite archers. However, some high commanders may have achieved their leadership role through heredity or through their wealth, so not all of them will be battle-proven leaders.

Command Bonuses

In addition to adding their charisma modifiers to their army's initiative, commanders provide this same charisma modifier as a morale bonus to any required morale checks (see the **Morale** section for details) made by units in their command who are within their command radius (see the **Command Presence & Radius** section for details). Units tied together through an unbroken chain of command receive the morale bonus of the army's primary general. Those outside the command link use the command bonus of the officer closest to their unit with the highest charisma bonus. Command bonuses stack with any applicable morale boosts, such as those provided by knights and bards. For some creatures, like orcs, command bonuses can strength-based at the CK's discretion.

Command Presence & Radius

Commanders have a quotient for leadership called command presence. The commander's command presence is the radius by which units under his command can see him and are willing to follow his orders; it is also his ability to directly lead a number of units within that defined radius.

The commander's command presence is equal to a one inch radius per level or hit die, with a bonus of +1 inch per point of charisma bonus. Additionally, the command presence radius can be extended 1 inch per 500 gp spent in payment or promise of loot (See **Fields of Battle** for more information on purchasing command presence). For some creatures, like orcs, command presence can be strength-based at the CK's discretion.

Commanded Units

A commander may only directly command a specified number of units. For each hit die he possesses, she may command two units. Additionally, she may command one extra unit per point of her charisma modifier and one extra unit per 500gp spent in loot offered to her troops to further her command presence. Thus, a **10th level** fighter with a charisma score of 16 can command 20 squads based on her level, plus two squads because of her 16 charisma modifier (20+2). If she also spends 2000 gp to bolster her troops, she can then command an additional four squads, bringing the total squads under her command to 26.

In Command

Units within the command radius of a commander are considered "in command." If they are in command within an unbroken chain of command, then these units gain the highest officer's morale bonus, usually the general's. If the chain of command is broken, then the units gain the morale bonus of the closest commander (who outranks their squad leader) with the highest charisma modifier. Thus, if a unit is within the command presence of two commanders, and one commander has no charisma bonus, but the other has a charisma of 16, granting an attribute bonus of +2, then the unit gains a +2 to morale bonus - until that commander is slain, or until the unit moves out of his command radius.

Morale

Morale is the willingness of a unit or army to advance and fight, and it's their ability to withstand the horrors faced on the battlefield without breaking and running. Quite simply put, morale is the measure of the unit's honor and bravery. In mass combat, morale is measured in the form of a save versus fear, otherwise known as a charisma save.

Morale Checks

As seen in the two sample stat blocks previously, each unit has a morale score that is a reflection of the unit's HD. The morale check and its success or failure is resolved like any other attribute check, but the morale score is added to the roll instead of the HD. While the morale score and HD are often the same, there are exceptions. For example, dwarves have a bonus to their morale score while gnolls and rabble units begin with a +0 morale. Cavalry units add the hit dice of rider and mount together to determine morale, and undead do not check morale at all.

CKs should be sure not to add both the unit's HD and its morale score to the attribute check. Units may, of course, add morale bonuses gained from their commanders and any other applicable morale bonuses. Units with many hit dice or with mental prime attributes will more likely succeed in their morale checks, remaining steadfast in the battle.

The challenge level (CL) for a morale check is determined by a number of circumstances, ranging from the death of a battlefield commander or hero unit, to suffering massive casualties against superior odds. **Table 11.4: Morale Check Conditions** lists the conditional modifiers that force a morale check. All applicable conditions stack. Additionally, two morale-causing situations are more fully discussed below: the loss of a commander and being out of command presence.

Morale Check: Loss of the Commander

The loss of a commander can demoralize a unit. If the commander falls or is captured and the troops are outside the command presence of another officer, treat the unit as being out of command presence (see below), which requires a morale check (CL 3; 1 for being out of command presence and 2 for witnessing their commander's fall or capture). If a commander is lost while the troops are in the command presence of another commander, however, the troops must also make a morale check (CL 2 for witnessing their commander's fall or capture) to accept the new commander's orders. Morale (charisma) checks for a unit to accept a new commander's authority do not include the new commander's charisma modifier, as the unit is not effectively under her influence at the time of the morale check. Keep in mind that a commander may only command as many units as her command presence allows, so that can affect her ability to gain command of the unit.

Morale Check: Outside the Commander's Command Presence

Units that have fallen out of their commander's command presence must immediately make a morale check without benefit of the commander's charisma bonus at CL 1. If the force's morale check succeeds, it continues to execute its last received command. If the force fails its morale check, the unit loses its action for that combat round. Units outside the commander's command presence fight defensively and move to withdraw or retreat from attackers should the fight go against them, but they take no other actions. If units remain outside a leader's command presence for more than four rounds and do not attack or take any actions, they desert the field if possible. If the unit is otherwise attacked during this time or forced to defend itself, it does so, though it makes no effort to move forward or capture objectives on the battlefield without the guidance of a commander.

Morale checks are forced for any of the following conditions. The listed challenge level modifier indicates the added difficulty to the morale check. Morale conditions stack, so units may suffer from more than one CL modifier. Note that undead units never need to check morale.

TABLE 11.4: MORALE CHECK CONDITIONS

Forced Morale Check*	Challenge Level Modifier
Unit is out of the command presence of an immediate commander	+1
Unit suffers a loss of half or more of its UHP in a single round	+1
Unit leader with highest command presence bonus is slain, captured, or immobilized	+4
Platoon** loses over half of its squads	+2
Immediate commander is slain, captured, or immobilized	+2
Opposition possesses more powerful magic	+1
Units outnumbered by opposition by 2 to 1	+1
Opponent unit is impervious to unit's attack damage	+2
Celestial, demon, or dragon of at least 12 HD manifests on the battlefield.	+3 or More***
Deity manifests on the battlefield (allies)	None required
Deity manifests on the battlefield (opposition)	+10 or More***

*Morale checks are forced for any of the listed conditions. The listed challenge level modifier indicates the added difficulty to the morale check. Morale conditions stack, so units may suffer from more than one CL modifier. Note that undead units never need to check morale.

**Refers to any configuration of troops made up of smaller sub-units as determined by the unit ratio set up for the battle.

***The power of a supernatural being such as a powerful celestial, dragon, or demon has a minimum effect on morale of at least +3, and potentially more as determined by the Castle Keeper, or as agreed upon by the players in a non **Castles & Crusades** game of *Fields of Battle*. A deity's presence adds +10 to the challenge level of the morale check, or more at the CK's discretion.

Broken Morale

The following details what can happen when a unit's morale breaks.

Withdrawal: The unit uses its action to take a full move away from any engaging unit in the easiest possible direction. If the unit encounters a friendly unit during its route, the encountered unit may allow it to pass, or its commander may attempt to assume command of the withdrawing forces (see the Regaining Command section).

If the unit is not recalled to battle by a commander, it continues moving at its full movement rate away from the battle. If it is attacked again and suffers additional casualties, a second morale check must be made. If the second morale check is successful, the unit continues its steady retreat until it has left the engagement area (the tabletop or whatever agreed upon boundary exists for the battlefield). If the second morale check is failed, however, the unit is now in a route (see the **Rout** below).

Regaining Command: If an adjacent commander is present at the end of a unit's withdrawal or is later encountered during the withdrawing unit's trek, the commander may attempt to regain command of the unit by making a successful charisma check. A unit commander whose troops have failed their morale check may not make this attempt. The challenge level of this check is equal to the number of withdrawing units. If the commander's check is successful, the units join with the other units under her command presence. Player characters and other hero units may also make this command attempt. If the charisma check is failed, the unit enters a route, fleeing the battlefield as quickly as possible.

Rout: When a second morale check is failed, or if a commander's attempt to regain control of a withdrawing unit fails, the withdrawing unit enters a rout. A rout is the complete, utter breakdown of command; the routed unit is in a state of sheer panic and terror. Routed units suffer a -3 armor class penalty, and they attempt to flee the battlefield as quickly as possible, moving up to 3 times their movement rate. If a routed unit encounters other allied combat units in its flight path, the encountered unit must also make a morale check, or it deserts with the routed forces. If the new unit succeeds in its morale check, it remains steady in the fight, but the routed unit continues to flee the battle. When the routed unit ultimately exits the battlefield, it is considered destroyed or lost; it cannot return to the battle.

If another commander encounters the routed unit, he may attempt to halt its rout, though he does so with a charisma check at CL 4. This commander must not be a commander who has previously failed to bring a unit under command. If the commander succeeds, the routed units fall into formation with other troops within his command presence. Only one last-ditch attempt to regain command of a routed unit is possible. If it fails, the routed unit is lost for the duration of the battle.

COMBAT ACTIONS

Melee

Attack rolls are made by adjacent foes to overcome targeted armor class. Damage is dealt and subtracted from the Unit Hit Points. When squads are destroyed, their numbers are removed from the larger force. Damaged squads who maintain morale are absorbed by other squads of similar composition (*i.e.*, swordsmen join up to form full squads of swordsmen from wounded ones). Units with reach weapons may attack squads at the end of their reach but not those adjacent to them. Units with a longer reach or reach weapons may reach over allies and attack enemies in their threatened area just as in standard combat.

Charge

Charge: A charge attack may be attempted by units at least as far away as their normal movement rate, but no more than double it. A successful charge attack deals an additional +2 damage, though the attacking unit takes a -4 penalty to its armor class.

Cavalry Charge: This is a a special maneuver which can only be made by cavalry units with good morale and within an officer's command presence. In order for a unit to charge, it may not be impeded by difficult terrain, such as ditches, hedgerows, fences, and the like. During a cavalry charge, the cavalry moves double its normal movement rate, and it deals an additional +2 points of damage with a successful attack. The charge affects every unit within its path whose armor class it successfully hits. The cavalry unit suffers a -4 penalty to its AC until its next combat turn.

Note: Lances deal double damage when used during a charge. Pikes and long spears set firmly to receive a charge make their attack roll prior to being struck by charging opponents; set attacks deal double damage on a successful hit versus charging enemies. Setting to receive a charge is a special maneuver, and it requires a morale check to issue orders to the defending unit.

Ranged Attacks

Ranged attacks are divided into direct fire and indirect fire (see below).

Direct Fire: Direct fire works exactly like a standard missile attack. Missile squads can fire on targets within their direct line of sight, applying standard penalties or bonuses for range, cover, concealment, and elevation to their attacks.

Indirect Fire: Indirect fire is the use of missile weapons to carpet an area of the battlefield. Units may only fire indirectly at long range or longer, as battlefield conditions make use of indirect fire nearly impossible at closer ranges and leave missile squads exposed to retributive actions by enemy forces. Firing indirectly is a full-round action requiring the entire force's concentration to launch a hail of fire on a single area of the field of battle.

To make an indirect fire attack, make a normal missile attack roll and subtract any penalties for range, cover, or concealment. On a successful hit, roll damage, and apply the damage, including any bonus damage, to every unit or individual caught in the attack radius, which is equivalent to 1 inch per two squads firing. Thus, 10 archery squads participating in an indirect fire attack may affect a 5-inch radius on the battlefield with this devastating attack.

Mounted Archers

Unlike heavy cavalry and lancers, mounted archers serve as an effective mobile force for flanking enemy formations. Mounted archers typically ride smaller, faster mounts and are less heavily armored than their heavy cavalry cohorts. Mounted archers may move up to half their movement rate and fire during their turn. Typically, they can move twice as far as archers travelling on foot. Mounted archers take a -2 to their attack roll while firing from a mounted position. This penalty combines with any range increment penalties.

Magical Attack

Magic works in mass combat as it does within the SIEGE Engine rules. Area-of-effect spells still affect a radius, line, or individual. The range of most spells is converted into 1 inch of battlefield space per 10 feet of range. Duration remains the same, and any saves are rolled as normal. A spell's radius or area of effect remains the same as its spell description in the **Castles & Crusades Players Handbook**. In squads or larger units of spellcasters, CKs should assume all equal members have the same spells and number of spells per spell level.

A magical attack may include using a scroll, wand, staff, or rod.

More powerful spellcasters rarely serve in units but are, instead, hero units due to their ability to so quickly change the tide of battle.

A Combat Sequence in Action

When squads of combatants come into contact with one another, make one attack roll versus the armor class of the adjacent opponents, acting in initiative order. Opponents may be from mixed units and have differing armor classes, so a successful roll against one unit may not affect another. If the attack roll successfully strikes the armor class of any adjacent opponents, roll damage based on the weapon type and damage adjustments of the attacking unit. Multiply this damage times the number

of attackers adjacent to an enemy unit. This number represents the total damage dealt by the attackers.

Divide the Unit Hit Points (UHP) of defending squads by the total damage dealt. The resulting number indicates the number of squads defeated in that combat round.

Combat Example: A platoon of 10 squads numbering a total of 50 elven swordsmen makes a successful attack roll versus a platoon comprising 12 squads of adjacent orcs. The attacking elves are actually in contact with 6 of the 12 squads of orcs. The elves roll 1d8+1 for damage and get a 6 for the total damage. The 6 orc squads in contact with the elf force then receive 36 points of damage. The orcs have 20 Unit Hit Points (UHP) per squad. One squad is destroyed and another must make a morale check after suffering over half of its unit hit points in damage. The unit succeeds, so the player marks the unit as wounded and records the damage the unit suffered.

Regrouping and moving into position so that more of their units are in contact with the elf front, the 11 remaining orc squads assault the elves. They roll a 16+1, effectively hitting the elves' armor class. The orcs roll a 4 for damage and multiply it times their 11 contacting squads, dealing 44 points of total damage. The elves lose 2 squads immediately, as they also have 20 Unit Hit Points. One unit suffers 4 points of damage, but does not need to make a morale check.

The remaining 8 squads of elves rally for another attack, slashing deeply into the orcs with their next attack. They roll a 15, again striking the orcs, doing 5 points of damage (5x8=40), effectively killing two units of orcs and reducing their platoon to 9 squads.

The 9 squads attack the 8 squads of elves, but roll a 2 and miss! The elves respond in kind, attacking and rolling a 19, striking successfully again. This time they score 8 points of damage times the 8 squads, which results in 64 points of damage! They destroy 3 squads of orcs, and the wounded squad is also lost. The orc platoon is now degraded to 4 squads, which is less than half the squads it had at the beginning of the engagement.

MORALE CHECK MOMENT: As the orcs have lost over half of their platoon to the elves, they must make a morale check for the remainder of the platoon. Their challenge level for their morale check is +2 for losing half their squads, and +1 for being outnumbered two to one, for a total CL of 3. This leaves the orcs needing to roll a 21 or better on their d20 roll to avoid failing their morale check and withdrawing from the combat. The orcs gain a +1 to their die roll for their morale score and a +1 to their die roll, as their chieftain promised them 500 gold pieces for participating in battle. They roll a 10, however, and their morale fails. They withdraw 30 feet from the elves in preparation of departing the battlefield.

The elves reply with a call to Thayaleon the Tree Lord and strike true and charge the retreating orcs. They rush forward on the withdrawing orcs striking them with a 15, dealing 8 more points of damage multiplied by 8 squads, or 64 more points of damage, destroying 3 more squads. The remaining squad fails its morale check, is routed, and destroyed as it turns to run.

THE SIEGE

Oftentimes a battle takes place where an entrenched opponent resists attackers from the relative safety of a fortification. For such great battles, one needs siege gear: catapults launching casks of flaming oil or plague-infected bodies over the city walls, or ballistae hammering targets sniper-like from the parapets! Then there are the brave, armored souls crouched in a wooden deathtrap known as the "Siege Tower" awaiting their chance to earn glory and plant the standard of their nation, people, or lord in the heart of their foe! That is siege combat. For such grand adventure, one needs some explanation of how siege equipment works, and knowledge about the strength of walls.

In mass combat, it is often necessary for one force to assault a fixed structure and for another force to defend that structure from an invading onslaught. In prolonged engagement scenarios, it is possible that some forces may have entrenched themselves, creating semi-permanent defensive positions. Possibilities for such scenarios are endless. This section provides details for the strength of fixed emplacements and siege equipment.

Sieges work effectively in fantasy role-playing scenarios as plot hooks and as exciting culminations of long-standing campaigns. Perhaps the PCs are required to take vital information or a holy relic into a stronghold to give the defenders that last piece of material needed to destroy the demonic enemy general. Perhaps the PCs are attempting to infiltrate an enemy base to slay an evil lich generating legions of undead warriors from the bowels of his tower, and the only way into the fortress is through the ranks of undead in their path. Simply defending what the PCs have fought long and hard to seize for themselves is about as "old school" a campaign scenario as it gets for fantasy role-playing games.

Siege Equipment

Siege engines function normally on the battlefield, affecting targeted squares on a hit and random squares on a miss. Listed below are common siege engines. **Table 11.5: Siege Engines** lists the siege engine's cost, typical damage, range increment, and number of crew to operate at a glance. **Table 11.6: Special Siege Engine Ammunition** lists optional ammunition for the siege engines.

Ballista

Cost: 500 gp, **Damage:** 3d8, **Area:** 5X5, **Range:** 120 ft., **Crew:** 1 or 2

A ballista is a huge wooden crossbow typically fixed in place, but it may be mounted on rollers, wagons, ships, and the like. Because a ballista is so large, medium- and small-sized users suffer a -4 penalty to their attack rolls when attempting to fire a ballista alone or -2 when firing as part of a crew. A ballista has a range increment of 120 ft. This weapon is primarily used to

kill large creatures on the battlefield (such as elephants, ogres, dragons, etc.) exposed within its range. Equally, ballistae may be used to fire flaming spears against siege towers to catch them on fire. A ballista with a crew of 2 may have the weapon prepared to fire every other round. Otherwise, the ballista may fire once every 3 rounds. A ballista takes up a space 5 ft. across.

Catapult, Heavy

Cost: 800 gp, **Damage:** 6d6, **Area:** 15x15, **Range:** 200 ft. (minimum range 100 ft.), **Crew:** 4

A heavy catapult hurls huge pieces of stone or bundles of cast iron balls at a range increment of 200 ft., with a minimum range of 100 ft. With a crew of 4 trained siege engineers firing the heavy catapult, it may be winched, loaded, aimed, and fired every other round. Heavy catapults may be loaded on wagons and moved at the bearing weight and speed of the animals hauling it. Otherwise, a heavy catapult may be pushed 10 ft. per round. Heavy catapults take up a space 15 ft. across.

Catapult, Light

Cost: 550 gp, **Damage:** 4d6, **Area:** 10x10, **Range:** 150 ft, **Crew:** 2

A light catapult is similar to a heavy catapult; it hurls stones, cast iron balls, or other ammunition. Light catapults have a range increment of 150 ft., with an absolute minimum range of 75 ft. A crew of 2 may winch, load, and fire every other round. Light catapults may be loaded on wagons and moved at the bearing weight and speed of the animals hauling it. Otherwise, it may be pushed 15 ft. per round. Light catapults take up a space 10 ft. across. See **Firing a Catapult** below for more information.

Ram, Battering

Cost: 1000 gp, **Damage:** 4d6, **Area:** 1 stationary target, **Range:** —, **Crew:** 10 medium-sized crew or 20 small-sized crew

A battering ram is a huge log, usually with an iron or bronze end cap. Battering rams may be complicated siege engines built with protective covering for the ram team (typically 2-4 squads of infantry) in a wheeled frame with the ram swinging from stout chains. Rams can also be simple affairs, being a log born by strong backs used to hammer against a gate.

A battering ram with protective covering affords cover (+10 AC) to the ram team. The ram may strike every other round and deals 4d6 points of damage to wooden structures, but deals only one-half damage to stone, and one-fourth damage to metal (such as a portcullis). A ram of this sort costs 500gp to construct.

Ram, Makeshift

Cost: Varies, **Damage:** 2d6, **Area:** 1 stationary target, **Range:** — **Crew:** 10 medium-sized crew or 20 small-sized crew

A makeshift ram deals 2d6 points of damage to wooden structures, and may be used to make a ram attack every other round. Makeshift rams provide no cover, concealment, or protection to their bearers.

Siege Tower

Cost: 2,000gp, **Damage:** —, **Area:** NA, **Range:** —, **Crew:** 20

A siege tower is a wooden structure covered with soaked animal pelts or thin metal sheeting to protect it from catching fire. The inside of the tower is hollow, with ladders built within to allow armed troops to easily scale its inside with full cover (+10 AC). The top interior floor of the structure is typically affixed with a drawbridge-like front wall that drops, attaching to the wall of an enemy castle, allowing the troops within to storm the battlements and end a siege.

Siege towers are typically constructed at the site of the battle after many weeks and months of siege. They are built to be slightly taller than the wall intended to be breached, thus their cost is reflected in multiples of 20 ft.

The tower's roof provides a firing platform that grants ½ cover or +4 armor class to defenders. The roof is large enough to hold one squad of combatants or 1 ballista and crew.

Siege towers have 50 hp per 10 ft. section and an armor class of 14. They may be pushed or dragged 5 ft. per turn, and require at least 20 medium-sized creatures, 10 large-sized creatures (such as ogres or horses), or any huge or colossal giant to move it per 20 ft. of height. For example, a 40-ft. siege tower may be pushed into position by 2 frost giants, 20 ogres, or 40 orcs.

Historically, the largest siege towers were nearly 140 ft. tall and 60 ft. wide. They could hold 1000 knights and archers. Such behemoths were outfitted with multiple catapults, ballistae, or cannons; they required hundreds of men to push and pull them into position. Siege towers cost 400gp per 20 feet in height to construct.

TABLE 11.5: SIEGE ENGINES

Engine	Cost	Damage*	Area	Range	Crew
Ballista	500gp	3d8	5X5	120 ft.	1 or 2
Catapult, Heavy	800gp	6d6	15X15	200 ft (min 100 ft.)	4
Catapult, Light	550gp	4d6	10X10	150 ft.	2
Ram, Battering	1,000gp	4d6	1 Stationary Target	—	10-20
Ram, Makeshift	Varies	2d6	1 Stationary Target	—	10-20
Siege Tower	2,000g	—	NA	—	20+

*A ballista or catapult can fire special ammunition. The special ammunition does damage as listed in **Table 11.5: Special Siege Engine Ammunition**.

Special Ammunition

Boiling Oil: Boiling oil is prepared in cauldrons on rooftops. Boiling oil affects a 10x10 ft. area directly below it and deals 6d6 points of damage. No attack roll is necessary. The oil may be set aflame with fire arrows, whereupon it deals an additional 4d6 points of burning damage before extinguishing in 1d2 rounds. A gallon of oil costs 8gps.

Falling Stones: Stones may be hurled by defenders on battlements. These stones affect a 10x10 ft. area below the wall and deal 1d8 points of damage.

TABLE 11.6: SPECIAL SIEGE ENGINE AMMUNITION

Engine	Ammunition	Damage	Cost
Ballista	Harpoon	2d8+and anchored to target.	5gp each
	Flaming Bolts	3d8+1d6 (fire)	2gp each
Catapult, Heavy	Cast Iron Balls	6d8	10gp each
	Flaming Oil Cask	6d6 (fire)	32gp each
Catapult, Light	Cast Iron Balls	4d8	10gp each
	Flaming Oil Cask	4d6 (fire)	16gp each
Dropped from Above	Boiling Oil	6d6 (with fire +4d6)	8gp/gallon
	Falling Stone	1d8	

Cast Iron Balls: Cast iron balls are expensive and rare, though they are easier to manufacture than the typical fieldstone spheres used as catapult ammunition. Cast iron balls are said to be an invention of dwarves, owing that iron deals double damage against stone structures and fortifications and triple damage to wood. Cast Iron Balls also have the potential of rolling when they land, causing havoc among ground troops, tearing off legs and pulverizing feet with their strike.

Flaming Bolts: Flaming bolts deal standard damage plus 1d6 points of fire damage. They have a 20% chance of setting ablaze any wooden structure they strike.

Soaked animal skins reduce the chance of wooden structures catching fire. They provide 1d4 rounds of complete fire protection, after which they reduce any fire damage by half.

Flaming Oil Cask: A flaming oil cask is typically an amphora-like jug filled with flaming oil that explodes on contact, hurling its contents throughout the ranks of enemy forces. Flaming oil casks are especially destructive to wooden structures, lighting them aflame, and causing panic (requiring Morale Checks) to forces adjacent to squads immolated by their fiery payload. These casks usually contain 2-4 gallons of oil and are affixed with a wick that must be lit before launching the payload.

Harpoon: Harpoon ammunition is attached to a length of strong rope up to 100 ft. long, with the rope coiled around a winch and pulley mechanism. Due to the weight of the rope and its effect on the aerodynamics of the harpoon, the firer takes an additional -4 to attack rolls. Harpoons may not fire beyond the length of their rope.

Firing a Catapult

A catapult affects an area based on the ammunition used, and firing a catapult requires a keen intellect to understand the proper elevation, arc, and trajectory of its payload. The engineer makes a standard ranged attack roll based on his base attack bonus, adding his intelligence modifier instead of his dexterity modifier for purposes of aiming the attack, and then subtracting any range increment penalties. Targets of a catapult attack may make a dexterity check to take half damage from the attack. The save's CL equals the firing engineer's intelligence modifier. On a roll of natural 1, the catapult shot hurls straight into the air, falls back down, and then lands on the catapult and its crew.

Catapults may be "locked" on a target once their engineer scores a hit. Fired ammunition continues to hit the same area with no additional attack roll required until it is re-aimed. Re-aiming takes one round and requires a new attack roll.

Assaulting Structures

Structures have Armor Class and hit points. Units attacking structures with the proper gear (rams or mauls for walls) do damage to structures as PCs normally do when kicking in doors and shattering locked chests. Walls and gates that are 10-20 ft. thick tend to have more hit points and more guardians, ensuring they do not get overtaken easily. Rules already exist for climbing walls, breaking stone, and cutting down doors, and they work normally in large-scale combat, with the squad or larger force replacing the individual effort for all except the hero units on the battlefield.

Walls

Walls come in a variety of shapes and sizes and are made from various materials. Wall hit points are measured by the number of feet of thickness per 10-ft. section of wall. Stone walls have an Armor Class of 16, reflecting the hardness of the wall and difficulty in damaging it. Wooden walls have an Armor Class of 14, reflecting the hardness of wood and difficulty of damaging it.

TABLE 11.7: WALLS

Wall Type	Hit Points	AC
Masonry	100 per ft.	16
Reinforced Masonry	200 per ft.	16
Hewn Stone	1000 per ft.	16
Iron	100 per inch	20
Wood	50 per ft.	14

Using the above table, a 15-foot-thick castle wall made from reinforced masonry would have 3000 HP per 10 ft. section

of stone. Taking down such a wall would require constant bombardment from catapults and/or magical strikes against the same 10 ft. section of wall to breach it.

Edged melee weapons typically deal no damage to stone walls over 1 ft. thick, no matter what special material the weapon is made from. This is because most melee weapons are designed to overcome armor, cleave flesh, and shatter bone; they are not tools designed to destroy fixed structures. One could argue that the "military pick" would work vs. stone walls since it is a "pick." The clever CK will remind the player that a military pick is for punching holes in helmets and breastplates, and a pickaxe is designed to carve through stone. Mauls and chisels do normal damage and require no attack roll to hit, so long as the striker is not under attack from defenders. In other words, a lone man hitting a wall section with a hammer and chisel without duress would simply do 1d8 points of damage to the wall per round. This is called tunneling or demolition and is detailed elsewhere in this chapter.

Magic

Magic: Magic spells which deal damage to objects also deal damage to walls. Spells such as *fireballs* and *lightning bolts* deal structural damage equal to the damage rolled on the dice. Other, more powerful spells such as *earthquake, dig*, and *move earth* may be used to easily collapse reinforced walls unless some precaution on the part of the builders is made to protect their structures from such magic.

Defensive Bonuses

Walls generally have protective features, providing cover for those who stand atop them. This protection is conferred as an armor class bonus due to cover.

Arrow Slits: Piercing a length of bastion wall, arrow slits provide excellent cover for defending missile units. Arrow slits grant 3/4ths cover or a +6 to armor class.

Crenellation: The classic "battlement" or castle top that ridges the edge of the wall. Crenellations confer ½ cover or a +4 to the armor class of defenders.

Earthen Rampart: An earthen rampart is similar to a trench, but elevated to require enemies to move up-hill against defenders crouched and firing or attacking from above them. Ramparts are often lined with sharpened dung-coated stakes, dealing 1d4 points of damage against approaching opponents and reducing their movement rate as they scale the expanse. They offer a secondary effect of potentially infecting climbers, requiring a constitution save (Challenge Level 4) to avoid their debilitating effects. Beings thus infected suffer a -2 to attacks and damage and may only move at half speed until they finally make a successful constitution save and shrug off the infection. The onset of this dysentery begins 1d12 hours after infection. Ramparts provide ½ cover or +4 armor class to those crouched in the fighting holes atop the rampart.

Improved Range: Archers firing from an elevation gain 10 ft. to their range increment for every 20ft. of elevation, with maximum bonus of +30 ft. at 60 ft. of elevation.

Trench: Trenches are in essence narrow earthen ditches, providing the most basic of siege protection. Defenders in trenches are conferred 1/4th cover or a +2 to their armor class.

Tunneling and Sapping

The purpose of tunneling and sapping is to dig beneath enemy positions, creating a weakness below the enemy's walls, tumbling them down upon the defenders' heads, and leaving a breach in their defenses. Tunneling or sapping takes place as part of a pre-existing scenario, as digging requires a great amount of work on the part of miners. Tunneling and sapping may also involve counter tunnels and counter sapping to collapse the tunnels of attackers.

Sapping: Sapping is the technique of digging trenches or tunnels to pierce, undermine, or destroy walled fortifications. Typically, experienced engineers are required to sap or mine an area, and do so while protected from enemy fire and counter sappers. In fantasy role-playing games, various races have an affinity to tunneling and mining, which may play a role in the use of such a technique in the campaign setting.

Sappers are also adept at building and maintaining siege equipment on site from on-hand materials. Sapper units come outfitted with the proper tools to perform their job: saws, shovels, hammers, chisels, and pickaxes. While siege engines demolish fixed emplacements by dealing direct deal direct hit point damage against them, sappers destroy or circumvent fortifications by carving their way through earth and stone at a number of feet or inches per minute, thereby penetrating or collapsing structures.

Tunneling beneath fixed fortifications takes time and requires a great amount of patience on the part of commanders. **Table 11.5: Sapping** gives the tunneling speed and time for sapper units based on their affinity to earth and stone. A unit of sappers clears a number of cubic feet of earth or stone per minute based on the rate listed in the chart.

TABLE 11.8: SAPPING

Race of Sapper Squad	Tunneling Rate per Minute		
	Earth	Soft Stone	Hard Stone
Halfling or Human	1 ft.	.5 ft.	.25 ft.
Gnome or Kobold	1.5 ft.	1ft.	.5 ft.
Orc or Hobgoblin	1.75 ft.	1.5 ft.	.75 ft.
Goblin	2 ft.	1.75ft.	1 ft.
Dwarf	2.5 ft.	2 ft.	1.5 ft.
Stone Giant	10 ft.	5ft.	2.5 ft.
Earth Elemental	15ft.	10 ft.	5 ft.
Xorn	20 ft.	20 ft.	20 ft.

Collapsing Walls: Tunneling under walls may cause them to collapse. Typically, sappers dig beneath enemy walls, timbering the roof and sides of their tunnel, but setting these to collapse once the tunnel is vacated by sapper squads. On its turn, a sapping unit may collapse a wall section as its action. Once the tunnel is collapsed, a section of wall equal to the width of the sapper tunnel crumbles, leaving a breach in the fortification.

Tunnels may also be used to secrete enemy troops inside of a fortification without the necessity of collapsing the wall at all. Would-be conquerors intending to occupy a captured fortress prefer to keep the structure intact for their own occupation rather than raze it to the ground, so their troops do not collapse tunnels and walls.

Tunneling and Counter Tunneling: A typical sapper tunnel is 10ft. x 10ft. and is accessible by one sapper squad. Multiple sapper squads may dig multiple tunnels at the same time.

One method of sapper combat is when one sapper crew attempts to collapse the tunnels of another by means of crossing or otherwise weakening the other crew's walls. In game terms, this is simply accomplished by breaching another sapper crew's tunnel and spending a full turn sabotaging it. Collapsing a tunnel causes 1d6 x 10 ft. of tunnel work to collapse. Sapper units caught in a resulting cave-in are instantly destroyed.

SEA BATTLES: FIRE AND WATER

Sea battles differ in some ways to land battles. The most obvious difference is they take place upon the sea, where armor actually makes combatants more vulnerable — they may be hurled overboard and drown, after all! Additionally, even the largest sea battles constrain quarters of melee combatants to ship decks, limiting their movement and mobility. Thus, as often as not, when ships are tied together, no quarter is asked, nor given! There is no retreat, and surrender likely brings the same end for the survivors as defeat.

The flipside to this is that sea battles involve a great deal of artillery fire prior to hand-to-hand engagement, with siege equipment and archers lofting swarms of arrows against the decks and riggings of opposing vessels. Vessels with greater speed and longer range tend to win the day before grapples are even cast!

Oh Captain, My Captain

The captain of a warship is the equivalent to the commander in a ground campaign for the purposes of initiative, ship movement, morale, ballistae and ramming attacks.

Armament

Most ships may be armed with ballistae or ballistae-type weaponry. Catapults are virtually impossible to use on any except the largest and slowest of battle barges, as the torsion from their firing would shatter the deck and destroy their vessel. That said, in a fantasy game, anything is possible.

Ballista, Light (ship mounted)

Cost 600 gp, Damage 2d8, Range 120 ft., Crew: 1 or 2

A ballista is a huge wooden crossbow mounted to a locking swivel and pivot. Medium- and small-sized crewmen using the giant weapon suffer a -2 penalty to their attack rolls. A light ballista has a range increment of 100 ft. The weapon is primarily used to set ships' sails aflame by firing fiery spears at them, or to hole enemy vessels at the waterline. A ballista with a crew of 2 may have the weapon prepared to fire every other round. Otherwise, the Ballista may fire once every three rounds. The ballista takes up a space 5 ft. across.

In ship battles, ballistae attack rolls are based on the captain's level and Intelligence modifier, as his maritime warfare expertise supersedes the skill of crewmen manning the ballistae. For instance, Captain Zarek, a 6th-level fighter with a 15 Intelligence score would add +7 to his crew's ballista attack roll.

Mangonel (ship Mounted)

Cost 1800 gp, Damage 5d8, Range 220 ft., Crew: 4

This heavy weapon uses torsion coils to directly fire round shot, stones, or flaming oil casks. It is a heavy, unwieldy weapon that suffers an additional -2 to hit and requires 3 rounds to load and 1 round to re-aim. It occupies a 10 ft. x 10 ft. space on a ship's deck. Mangonels' are mounted on ships and battle barges to maintain seaside sieges of port towns and fortresses. An historical example of the mangonel's use is Alexander the Great's siege of Tyre.

Range Increment Penalties

Ballistae and other missile attacks suffer a -2 penalty for each range increment. Thus, a ballista fired at a range of 600 ft. has a -10 penalty to hit due to range penalties; combined with its -2 difficulty penalty for firing the unwieldy siege piece, a ballista fired at this range suffers a total -12 penalty to hit.

Combat and Combat Actions

CKs should treat sea combat as per the mass combat rules for land battles. The sailors and marines aboard the ships form units via the unit size rules, just like in land combat. The only difference between the hand-to-hand melee upon the sea and that on land is that such melee can only take place when ships are lashed together and boarded. This maneuver is detailed in the grappling rules below. If ships are never boarded, then fire and movement rates rule the battles upon the high seas!

Grappling: Once ships are within 30 feet of each other, sailors aboard the ship with the prevailing advantage (i.e., the least damaged and/or the fewest casualties) may attempt to grapple the opposing ship. To grapple, the attacker needs only to make a successful ranged touch attack against the hull's armor class. At least two ropes must be successfully grappled to an enemy ship to successfully lash the ships together.

Allies aboard their attacking ship tie off the ropes, bringing the ships crashing together, shattering any oars not stowed, and forcing all members of each crew to make a dexterity save (Challenge Level 5) to avoid falling. Crewmen hanging from riggings gain a +2 to their check. Anyone failing from the rigging has a 50% chance of falling 1d4 x10 ft. to the hard deck, taking a cumulative 1d6 points of damage per 10 ft. of the fall, or they fall into the water, forcing swim checks. Sailors who fall overboard are lost for the remainder of the battle.

Those on deck who fail their dexterity save and fall must spend the subsequent round getting up.

Cutting Grapples: Cutting grappling ropes takes 1 round per rope. No other action may be taken by a squad while cutting the lines. Assume one rope per squad of marines or sailors aboard any ship.

Hulls and Holing: A ship's hull has 50 hp per 10-foot section and an armor class of 14 for the purpose of holing or damaging the boat. Ships' hulls are highly vulnerable to *warp wood* spells! A *warp wood* spell cast on the hull of a ship causes it to immediately sink. For battle purposes, the ship and its crew are both lost, unless the latter are rescued. It otherwise takes a holed ship 1d10 rounds for a ship to sink completely, allowing other ships to rescue crewmen and marines.

Masts, Rigging, and Sails: Masts have 50 hp each and an armor class of 14 for the purpose of cutting them down with weapons. Sails have an armor class of 10 and 25 hit points; sails take double damage from fire. Burning sails and rigging fall to the deck, dealing 3d6 points of fire damage the first round, 2d6 the second, and 1d6 the third over a 10 x 20 ft. area directly below the sail. This fire has a 10% chance per round of catching the deck and rails on fire, as well. A ship's maximum speed is reduced by 25%, rounded down, for each destroyed sail. Destroying a mast destroys all remaining sails on it, reducing the ship's speed accordingly. If a ship without oars loses all its sails, its maximum speed is reduced to zero.

For example, a carrack has a maximum speed of 18ft. per round and hoists six sails on its three masts. The carrack enters combat and loses one of its sails. The CK reduces the carrack's maximum speed by 25%, rounding down, with a result of 14ft. per round. Should the carrack lose another sail, the CK would reduce the maximum speed again, this time by 25% of 14. This would continue until the carrack lost all its sails, when its maximum speed would be reduced to zero.

Rams and Ramming: A ship's ram deals 5d10 points of damage on a successful hit against an opposing ship. The attack roll is based on the ship's captain's base to hit, with no modifiers for strength or dexterity. Enchanted rams receive any applicable magical bonuses, and captains under the effect a bard's inspiration ability, a *bless* spell, or a *prayer* spell, or any other spell providing relevant bonuses may add those to the attack roll, as well. On a successful hit, the ships are tied together as if grappled. Ships with oars may back away from a sinking vessel if the captain makes a successful Intelligence roll and opts to move his vessel on the next turn. The challenge level of this roll is based on the length of the opposing vessel, adding +1 to the challenge level for every 25 ft. in length.

Speed: Ships can move at speeds between 2-10 miles per hour, translating to roughly 5-25ft per round. Oared ships can double their speed during a ramming attempt, but they can only maintain ramming speed for 1d4 rounds + 1 round for every 10 rowers.

Swinging to the Opposite Deck: Swinging on ropes to the opposite deck is a movement action requiring a successful Dexterity Check (Challenge Level 4). A successful roll places the unit safely on the opposition's deck, as intended. Failure means they fall from the rope and have a 50/50 chance of hitting the deck or falling in the water. Units and characters hitting the deck suffer 2d6 points of damage and must spend the subsequent round getting up.

Forecastles and Sterncastles: Forecastles and sterncastles offer a +2 armor class bonus to their defenders against missile fire due to their elevation and wooden crenellations.

TABLE 11.9 SAMPLE SHIPS

Common Ships	Length	Width	Crew	Artillery	Ram	Oars	Masts/ Sails	Speed/ Hours	Speed/ Round	Cost
Carrack	120 ft.	100	82/+300 passengers	2 ballistae/2 mangonels	No	None	3/6	7 mph	18 ft.	120,000 gp.
Trireme	125 ft.	23 ft.	170	None	Yes	170	1/1	2 mph	5 ft.	5000gp
Longship	120 ft.	27 ft.	50-80	None	Yes/Optional	25	1/1	8mph	20 ft.	30,000 gp.
Cog	100 ft.	20 ft.	20/+120 passengers	None	No	None	2/2	8 mph	20 ft.	5000 gp.
Galley	160 ft	20 ft.	30-50/+30 passengers	4 ballistae	Yes/ Optional	20/ Optional	2/2	10 mph	25 ft.	60,000 gp.

Aerial Combat

Aerial combat units are generated in the same way as they are in standard mass combat, and combat works the same, except it takes place in three dimensions. A unit's movement rate is based upon the flight speed of the riders' mount.

When a unit is reduced to less than 50% of its hit points, it must land and cannot return to the air again until the unit is healed above 50% of its hit points.

If a single attack reduces an aerial unit to less than 25% of its hit points, the unit plummets from the sky, taking falling damage as well. This falling damage equals a cumulative 1d6 per 10 ft. fallen, and is suffered by the entire unit. A dexterity check saves for half damage.

WAR

The above rules provide a simple template allowing the CK a quick mechanical approach to solving the problems of running mass-scale combat. For a complete, detailed treatment that includes everything from tactical battle formations to detailed commander morale and hero rules, please refer to the already published **Fields of Battle** boxed set

PROVISIONS

An army marches on its stomach. In campaigns where armies must traverse large distances, the question of how to feed and water the soldiers and mounts becomes an issue. Certainly, it is completely fine for a Castle Keeper to waive such micro management to "foraging," but for a grittier, more realistic feel, an army must be fed.

The average soldier requires a minimum of one day's rations for every day on expedition. A day's minimum rations equal 1 lb. of dry food and a minimum of ½ gallon of fresh water per day. For every two days, the soldier's meals are mixed with some fresh food: fruits, vegetables, or fresh meat.

In simplest terms, each medium-sized soldier requires the following:

TABLE 11.10 COST OF PROVISIONS

Provision	Cost	Weight
4 gallons of water per week in temperate climes*:	4 gp.	32 lbs.
Rations (Dry and Fresh)	3 gp.	7 lbs.

* In warm climates, such as desert and jungle, this amount doubles to take into account the simple sweat and grind of the march.

To calculate the total cost of provisions and the foodstuffs' total weight, multiply the gold piece total and the weight total.

Primitive wooden wagons of the type described in the **Players Handbook** carry a maximum load of 8000 lbs.; however, the type and sort of wagons available heavily depend on the sort of campaign the CK is running.

It is possible a Castle Keeper may run a campaign where elephants, camels, howdahs, or slave-borne supplies exist. The possibilities are as endless as the adventures your imagination can create.

Foraging

Foraging is the act of plundering the countryside for foodstuffs. Foraging is difficult, and may require extra coin on the part of the warlord in order to purchase food or water (in the case of good-aligned characters). In most terrain, the army must take time to pillage, plunder, scavenge, or forage for food. Highly civilized areas typically have more foodstuffs to offer, leaving the soldier's dry rations intact. In less-civilized regions, game may be plentiful, but acquiring it requires hunting. In civilized areas, additional food may be purchased at market price plus 1d20%, depending on local rates. Castle Keepers should modify the price of food as conditions in their own campaign dictate.

TABLE 11.11 FORAGING

Environment	Foraging Chance	lbs. of Food x100 lbs. gathered
Civilized Urban	50%	2d100
Civilized Suburban	70%	3d100
Civilized Agricultural	85%	5d100
Uncivilized Temperate	60%	2d100
Uncivilized Desert	10%	2d20
Uncivilized Mountain	50%	5d20
Uncivilized Jungle	90%	4d100*

* Tropical food requires a successful constitution save vs. poison to avoid cramping from the abundant and unfamiliar fruits and food items. Those failing their save are unable to travel for 1d4 days.

Foraging takes an army 15 minutes per every 100 lbs. of food gathered. This time is halved if a ranger travels with the army and makes a successful survival check, the CL for which is +1 for every 500 troops in the army.

CHAPTER 12 – MONSTER ECOLOGY

Monsters have haunted our waking hours from the time we were small children, when the thing beneath the bed clawed its bridled rage across the wooden floors of our nightmares. As adults, living in a world where the monsters are almost always human, it is difficult for us to imagine, much less capture, those elusive beasts that haunt the edges of our waking. When you are young and the world is open to possibilities, when explanations do not assuage the wild pulse, but rather confuse the senses and dull your ability to truly understand, is when monsters are real. And that is the challenge of the Castle Keeper: recapturing those moments of fear, when monsters, unsought, but all too real, creep quietly down the hallway floor, because in this imaginative world of your making, monsters are real.

The monster is the core of the role playing experience. Overcoming adversity, climbing the mountain, or unlocking the trapped door are themselves moments filled with excitement. They however pale in comparison to the wild experience of battle with a monster, where the life of the character hangs in the balance of a decision and a dice roll. First and foremost, the CK must understand the monster's role in the game. Once this concept is firmly grasped, understanding its attributes, abilities, and general mechanics is much easier and a world of possibilities open up for the CK, which in turn open up a world of dread for the player.

UNDERSTANDING THE MONSTER CONCEPT

Too often Castle Keepers, or game masters in general, use the monster as a weapon, a sledgehammer to pound the party of characters mercilessly. Though the monster certainly has this use, and there are occasions that call for the monster's weight to come crashing down on the players, it really is ancillary to the role of the monster. On the other end of the coin, the monster is not a simple obstacle for the player to maneuver around or play, as if it lived in a vacuum. In **Castles & Crusades**, the monster is a living element of the story, one that can change and alter to the situation even as the characters can; the CK must treat it as a central tool of the storyboard to ratchet up the excitement and danger. As any student of the horror genre understands, direct bludgeon attacks where the monster thrashes about in a seasonal display of gore does little to heighten the fear factor; though it may heighten the "I just vomited in my mouth" factor, it does not drive people into the wild corners of their own minds seeking for answers about which they do not understand.

The foremost thing to understand about the monster is that it is not a battering ram for the CKs ire or the player's adrenaline. It is a creature, with its own wants and desires, with an ecology that drives it even as the player's own desire drives their characters. The monster is a creature in and of itself, with habits evolved from genetic makeup and environment, using its abilities as efficiently as a welder users a blow torch. Taking the monster and hurling it directly at the party of players in order to crush them rarely does justice to these beasts - unless their

genetic make-up calls for such actions - and usually does little but excites the players into a dice contest not unlike a game of craps. But by using the monster's abilities as the monster would, the creature immediately leaves the realm of understanding for the player.

In order to do this, the CK must know the monster first. Read its background, understand its abilities, imagine under what circumstances those abilities would be the most effective and deploy the monster in that fashion. Treat the monster as an animal who desires life even as much as the players do, or at least, as any animal in the wild would. Rarely does a lion pursue a hunt to the detriment of its own life. They do not get angry and humiliated and whine about their ego or id. They attack to kill something, but failing that, they quit, either looking for a more effective route to kill their prey or leaving altogether. Monsters should act the same; avoid the heedless duel to the death if possible, for this only reduces the monster's capacity to affect the players in the course of the game. Fighting the unknown is always more terrifying than fighting the known.

There are some exceptions. Unlike the lion cited above, many creatures in **C&C** are pure evil, mad, or magical creations with little drive to survive beyond that given to them by their creators. Use these as their backgrounds dictate, but understand that some are mindless killing machines and others have more survival instincts. This increases the unknown factor in the game. If players, through their characters, cannot readily identify what monster is going to react one way or the other, they must tread a little more lightly, and are more loathe to risk their skins in a free-for-all battle with some creature that may or may not possess some ability to mete out death quickly.

Understand the monster and use his abilities to engender that element of the unknown.

With that in mind it is important to note that the CK should not overly love the monster. Do not make it so that monsters never die, so desirous of life, they never fight to the end, but always run off into the wilds. Players rapidly tire of such devices and as any hero must, they long to kill the bad guy. As noted, some monsters are more like animals, such as the owlbear or a giant, but others are just closer to magical creations such as the undead. Use them to their abilities and nature.

MONSTERS & THEIR ATTRIBUTES

Castles & Crusades does not categorize monster attributers in the same manner as it does character attributes. Characters possess six standard attributes: strength, dexterity, constitution, charisma, wisdom, and intelligence. The game categorizes monster attributes in only four categories: none, physical, mental and both physical and mental. These represent the saving throws and attribute check categories for monsters rather than the actual attributes. These mean the monster is more able to defend itself or react to physical or mental conditions than the other. Few monsters have both. Saving throws are made in the same manner as for characters, but with broader descriptors. Each monster is listed in the **Monsters & Treasure** and other monster listings as having either physical (P), mental (M), both (P+M) or none (N) as its saving throw category. The category roughly equates to primary or secondary attributes and thus the base number needed to make a saving throw. Physical attributes are strength, constitution, and dexterity. Mental attributes are intelligence, wisdom, and charisma. A goblin has a physical saving throw category, so it makes all saving throws or checks dealing with strength, dexterity, or constitution with a challenge base of 12, and all saving throws or checks dealing with intelligence, wisdom, or charisma with a challenge base of 18. The monster's number of hit dice acts as a modifier to this roll in the same fashion as described under HIT DICE (HD)

When dealing with monsters, it is important to keep in mind that monsters are not player characters. **Monsters & Treasure** is a book designed for use by the CK, not the players. Conversely, monsters shouldn't use the **Players Handbook**. Monsters do not have specific attributes such as strength, and therefore do not fall under the bonuses and penalties that accompany character attributes. Awarding monsters character attributes immediately gives them a bonus advantage, making them stronger or weaker than designed. A monster's abilities, whether strong, fast, weak or slow already play out in their listed attacks and special abilities.

Astute players and CKs cannot help but notice that the system effectively awards monsters three primary attributes, and three secondary attributes, seemingly putting them at an advantage over characters, who often have only two. But again characters fall under a different set of guidelines. Character advancement, though it does not improve his attributes, improves his bonus; monsters get no such advancement. Their strengths and weaknesses are built into their descriptions and they have no ability to advance, unless by design or desire of the CK. Their rolls never improve.

This approach seems to break down at the demi-human level. Why do demi-humans in **Monsters & Treasure** have 3 primary attributes and demi-human characters only have two? The answer is simple. Demi-human characters are characters and demi-human monsters are monsters. The demi-human monster is stuck, with their three primary attributes fixed and unchanging. They gain no bonuses, nor suffer any penalties. Demi-human characters on the other hand earn more experience and gain more skills and improve their capabilities; this is expressed in their level. Each level they gain, they also gain in abilities.

To put this in a greater game context, the characters represent that small portion of the human or demi-human community that possess that "four o'clock in the morning courage." They are not like the others in their tribe, village, kingdom; they are the few possessed of enough courage and gumption to set down the walking stick and take up the sword and plunge into the unknown.

Example: Death in the world of Inzae is a hard thing. If your body is not burned, no matter how heroic the death, the spirit goes to the gray world. This means an eternity of misery, which begs the question: Why would anyone leave their homes if they risk death and eternal damnation? The reply is simple: Most don't. 99% of the people stay home where they are safe and warm. The other 1% are adventurers, and they are different.

Those dwarves in the **Monsters & Treasure** are monsters, not player characters. They are different.

Note that though CKs are more than welcome to assign attribute numbers, as the characters possess, to monsters in their individual game. Monsters with attributes create a whole new level of complexity to the game. The CK must now roll attributes for dozens of monsters, or at least design them into the monsters themselves, and adhere to a whole new host of modifiers for those monsters possessed of higher attribute scores. Furthermore, the game's balance is unsettled for monsters as presented include their strengths and weakness, whether mental or physical.

In short, the CK must understand that two separate overriding principles guide monsters and characters. The design supports the balance built into the game and affects the overall playability and fun factor that all games must, in the end, address. It is best to understand the differences between the two and leave the system as is. Far more effective ways exist of building or expanding the monster concept, whether through new creations, or simply variances on an old monster.

MONSTERS WITH A TWIST

After players have played C&C for awhile, it is only natural that they become familiar with the monsters in play. And orc is an orc after all and it doesn't take long for a player to realize

their relative strengths and weaknesses. It has become common knowledge that the only way to destroy a regenerating troll is with fire. Every troll encounter involves a character arming himself with oil, torch or other flammable material and casting the burning weapon upon the seemingly hapless troll. This is a natural outcome of years of play and experience. However, this does not need to be the end-all of the already-encountered monster's role in the game. Apply simple variations on a monster, changing its make-up somewhat, expanding or contracting its abilities, adding new ones, or changing its very habits. This is a simple process and one every CK should follow.

Creating variations of monsters actually serves two purposes. The monster itself gains a second life, and what was a familiar monster becomes something new. It is once again, unknown. The familiar becomes the dangerous as common reactions associated with the monster prove useless and whole new methods must be used in dealing with the monster, whether role playing, in the defense or offense.

Example: In the world of Aihrde there are several types of trolls, the most common being the standard troll described in **Monsters & Treasure**. Less common, though probably better known, are Troll Lords. These latter creatures are monolithic beasts possessed of an evil that transcends the regular troll's almost animal reaction to its emotional shortcomings. When first encountered a Troll Lord obviously heals itself, lending itself to the belief that as a troll its great weakness is fire. Because of the creature's background, once a living tree that has left the path of its more benign brethren, it fashioned magics for itself that made fire an ally. Fire and acid attacks, common ailments for trees and trolls, actually heal the Troll Lord. A character who casts *fireball* on a Troll Lord is likely to meet a stark surprise.

Common Variations

Background: Every official **C&C** monster's entry begins with a physical description of the monster, and is either meshed with or followed by a brief description of its habits and habitat. Players quickly learn these habits but it is easy enough to change them. Add your own personal flavor to a monster's description, giving it a reason for being where it is; or even a wholly different ecological niche. There is no reason a harpy, normally associated with forests, cannot live in the deep deserts. Changing a creature's background niche will surprise the players and elicit a different response from their characters because they suddenly face the unknown.

Personality: Changing a monster's personality serves the same purpose. An ogre, normally viewed as a lumbering idiot but who now fights as a clever hunter, able to stalk prey and set traps, is something entirely new. Players met with such a beast must instantly question whether it is the same beast, a variant, or some new monster concocted in the wilds. **Monsters & Treasure** does not codify the personality of monsters nearly as much as it does backgrounds and actual mechanics, but this should not dissuade the CK from changing assumed or stereotyped personalities. Even those creatures the characters have become used to, or rather, most especially the ones characters are used to, should undergo sudden revisions. The sky is of course the limit.

Base Mechanics: The easiest part of any monster to adjust are the basics of hit dice and armor class, by allowing the creature to be stronger or even weaker than expected and what was a normal encounter suddenly becomes more interesting. Keep these alterations within reason. Giving a monster that has no natural defenses a 23 AC is not going to be met with anything other than incredulous grumblings. But meeting a an orc with an AC of 18, gained through his large shield and thick armor becomes both believable and a desirable target in that the characters want to possess what he owns.

Abilities: Treat special attacks or defenses much as you do AC and HD. It takes little effort and less imagination to imagine a magical monster with different abilities than normal. Of course, the CK must remember to keep these changes within some normal bounds; allowing an armless creature an improved grab attack would not be within the spirit of the monster.

Note on Experience: Remember to adjust the experience point value up or down with adjustments to the monster's abilities.

ROLEPLAYING MONSTERS

Role playing is a facet of running a monster that Castle Keepers often overlook in the mad rush to get the combat going. Take some consideration of the monster itself, and if the adventure allows for it, develop a personality for the creature, complete with goals, designs, prejudices, etc. This works especially well for long running campaigns, as monsters easily take on recurring roles in the game. These traits, if allowed to play, take the game to new heights, creating a new dimension for the characters.

Example: Ki and Stark unearthed a dungeon and accidently freed a Rune Maiden (see **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde**). In the ensuing battle the party drove off the Maiden but not before she spirited one of their number, Stark, to the Void. Later he escaped, stealing her magical steed and returned to the world of Aihrde where he continued his life of adventure. The Maiden, however, had not forgotten the theft of her beloved steed, and set about laying a trap to slay Stark and retrieve her steed.

In this example, the CK plays up the Rune Maiden's love of her magical steeds and uses it as a catalyst for future adventure with the same monster.

Growing up Monster

In developing personalities for monsters it is helpful to map out, at least mentally, where the monster has come from, its origins, something of it physical traits, what has brought it to the region it haunts. Developing all these traits creates a depth for the monster that helps serve the CK as a guide in running the creature, creating more havoc and seemingly more terrifying or evil, benign or helpful.

EXAMPLE TRAITS FOR MONSTERS

1.	An ancient creature, filled with knowledge; tired and greedy for wealth.
2.	A hunter, seeking to fill its dungeon with a menagerie of creatures.
3.	A clubfooted warlord, bent on using flying beasts to wage his conflicts.
4.	The creature, wizard, etc. obsessed with eternal life.
5.	A haunt, fearful of light, upon seeing it, it goes into a blind rage.
6.	A multi-headed creature with one head dead and dragging; it is diseased and mad.
7.	A flying creature whose wing is so damaged it is stuck on the ground.
8.	Wise and ancient, the creature is bored, seeking to guide or pester the characters.
9.	A wickedly intelligent humanoid, schooled in warfare, tactics, and weapons.
10.	A fey that falls in love with whoever talks to her/him, becomes enraged if jilted.
11.	A sphinx enslaved, chained and bound since a pup; bitter but helpful.
12.	A grotesquely obese creature that must eat constantly.

These are only a few examples and the sky is truly the limit when it comes to monsters and understanding how they react when encountering the characters.

Creating a monster's personality should not become method acting; nor should the monster become such a fixture that its destruction is impossible or unwanted by the CK. Simple traits and background material for the monster should give the CK plenty of material to develop the coming encounters. As cautioned above, do not put too much work into the monster unless the CK intends it to become a long term fixture in the game. Chances are, all the work put into the monster leads to the same conclusion: the monster lying dead on the ground and the players tallying up experience points.

Magic Items and Treasure

Creatures who possess large treasure troves often have magic items within those troves. The Castle Keeper, in designing the monster or the encounter, should take note of this treasure. Any monster that has items it can use would more than likely use them. An orc who has in his possession a +1 longsword is more than likely going to use the sword in battle. This goes for almost any item, whether it be a ring, horn, or cloak. If usable, the creature should use it. Of course, some monsters would not deign to use magic created by others; an ancient dragon for example probably views such items as trinkets and pays little more attention to them than they do a piece of gold.

Value is relative of course, some monsters may hoard items the characters do not find particularly attractive and the CK should not shy away from filling a hoard with the bones of the fallen or some other thing the monster finds worthy. Be wary of not awarding treasure however, as part of the motivation of playing a role playing game is gaining the wealth of ages, but on an occasion a trove filled with mounds of broken weapons can make for an entertaining role playing session if nothing else.

MONSTER ALIGNMENT

Alignment in **Castles & Crusades** represents the basic moral or ethical outlook of any sentient being. Those creatures without sufficient reasoning capacity or high levels of self-awareness do not have alignment and are driven by basic instincts rather than any learned ethos. A lion has no alignment as its instincts drive it forward, it does not stop to ponder the ethical ramifications of its decisions or acts. A dragon, elf, orc, and human can all examine the effects of their actions and decide whether or not they lie within the ethos.

It is easy to interpret alignment on a philosophical level. An orc is lawful evil, as its actions seem — according to a Judeo-Christian ethic — brutal, unforgiving, depraved, and unkind and therefore understood to be evil. However, an orc may not see his or her actions as evil but rather efficient in ridding the world of a pestilent species — elves. However, **Castles & Crusades** is not a philosophical discussion group. It is a game, and the orc, whatever its own variant causes and interpretations, is actually evil; its view of itself is wrong. The evil creature is a monster not because its mother abused it, but it is evil because it is the nature of the monster. Grendel was not evil because he was malformed and rejected by his father; but was evil because the creature's mother was a foul demon and he himself of demon kind. His malformations were only a byproduct of his nature or pure coincidence.

Changing a monster's alignment is possible and can often be fun; but at no point should the game become bogged down by any moral quandaries of whether slaying a monster is right or wrong. Slaying the monster is right, because it is evil.

Example: A troll attacks the party and they kill it, burning its body as custom demands. As evening settles upon the group a second troll attacks, enraged, but upon recapturing some portions of the first troll, it flees the field of battle. The party immediately sets off to pursue, and immediately the question arises what the second troll is doing. It is learned through sorcery and legend lore that the troll is actually the first troll's mate and was bereaved at its fall; stealing the arm is its attempt to bring back her fallen mate. The party is torn about whether to track the second troll down and kill it but allowing it its rest and grief seems the right choice. A debate breaks out in which it is determined that the creature, as feeling as it may be, is evil. How does the party come to this inescapable conclusion? The book says it is so.

MONSTERS AND THEIR ECOLOGY

All animals and creatures live within certain ecological ranges and climes. A quick review of the ecology section in the **Chapter 5: The World** above shows a wide variety of ecological niches for animals to inhabit. When designing a world, the ecological biome in which the creatures that inhabit the world should

receive at least a cursory examination. Creatures and beasts should be placed within a particular biome. This serves to give the world a consistent and believable environment and avoids disjunctive problems such as finding creatures in locations that make no immediate sense. This latter is important especially for experienced characters, rangers, druids and the like, as their skills, both assumed and actual, come into play all the time; learning that a coastal creature is living in the mountains may lead them off track if they already understand that that creature normally lives elsewhere.

The section below addresses some basic considerations in placing beasts in a world; the type of beasts to be concerned with and manners in which to vary animals according to climate and geology, such that their placement makes sense and is made easier.

When creating a clime for a creature, either one designed by yourself or taken from another source, consider its geographic, geologic, and ecological distributions to complete its description. Then develop variations on the monsters to show regional adaptation.

The lists below help the Castle Keeper to create random encounter charts for beast and animals found in their world. By breaking down areas and regions into its basic components, the Castle Keeper is given a vast array of possible choices and regions in which to have unique encounters.

CREATURES, BEASTS, MAGICAL BEASTS AND OTHERS

There are 17 types of creatures in **Monsters and Treasures**. Of these, the only types the Castle Keeper need concern themselves with assigning ecologies to are: animal, beast, plant and vermin. To a greater or lesser extent, the other types of creatures can survive in such a broad range of climates as to not be a concern or their very being limits their location or range and are self addressed.

That is not to say that dragons, giants, aberrations and others do not have particular biomes in which they live or are limited to, but their description or very being limits it. For example, a frost giant can ostensibly be found nearly anywhere but would most likely and most often be found in colder regions of the world. The Castle Keeper is encouraged to look at these cases individually and decide for themselves whether or not a biome needs to be given for those creatures.

Other creatures, such as the dwarf, human, orc, and rat live nearly everywhere and so have no natural biome to which they are acclimated. As with other creatures though, the Castle Keeper is entirely within their rights to place these creatures within particular biomes depending upon desire and need.

GEOGRAPHIC REGIONALIZATION

Although all creatures live or thrive within particular biomes or ecological niches, that is not to say they live in all those biomes. They may exist in only a few restricted geographic locations within that particular biome. On the other hand, some animals or variations of the same species exist in similar biomes.

For example, a deer or its variants can live in almost every temperate biome in the northern hemisphere. Other animals, such as the American Bison only dwelt in the North American Great Plains. In a fantasy setting, similar instances of geographic limitations should restrict some monsters while not others.

Along these lines, many species have regional adaptations and live in several different biomes yet have features distinctive and useful for their environment. The Bengal tiger and the arctic tiger are both in the same animal species but have color and hair density/growth variations unique to their environment. Such can be the case with many fantasy creatures should the Castle Keeper choose to place them in disparate biomes.

GEOLOGIC NICHES

The following are several basic geologic niches in which creatures can live. Refer to **Chapter 5: The World** for a more detailed discussion on each.Many can survive in several geologic niches while others would or should be limited to certain niches that best fit the monster. For example, the griffon may live on high mountain peaks near front ranges so they can hunt grasslands or scrublands but they do not have to live in every front-range. Rather, localize the griffon to a few front ranges or mountainous areas and not every one. As in the real world, an elephant can survive in India, America, Africa, and South America; however, it only dwells in Africa, India, and Asia. Do the same with animals for your world.

Mountains: Highland region with elevations routinely above 7,000 feet and steep narrow valleys with rugged peaks.

Hills and Foothills: These include low elevation regions similar to mountains but with elevations of no more that 2,000 feet. Although there are steep and narrow valleys they are also shallower and more gradually displaced over the land. The foothills of mountain regions are included in this.

Flatlands: These are level to near level regions with no more than several hundred feet of elevation changes, without any truly narrow distinctive valley and peaks.

Riverine or Lake: These are those regions located along major river courses or near large lakes.

Coastal: These are regions where oceans or lakes meet land. They can be narrow strips of land or broad coastal environments stretching inland for hundreds of miles.

Lake: These are large bodies of water located inland and refers to those animals that live in the lake as well.

Ocean: Regions of massive bodies of water found between continents or large landmasses. Generally considered to consist of saline water.

ECOLOGICAL NICHES

As with geologic regions, animals and beasts should thrive in particular ecological regions, called biomes. An abbreviated list of the different biomes is listed below. Many species can survive, with some small variations, in several different biomes. Many times the variations consist only of skin, hair or fur color and size adaptations.

Tropical and Sub-Tropical Broadleaf Forest: Heavy rainfall throughout the year with dense vegetation typifies this biome.

Tropical and Sub-Tropical Dry Broadleaf Forest: These forests are similar to tropical and subtropical forests and may even have rainfall in excess of those forests, however they have a long dry season during which all or many of the trees drop their leaves.

Tropical and Sub-Tropical Coniferous Forest: This forest type receives lower rainfall than the above, are generally located in higher elevations but with tropical temperature zone and are dominated by pines and oaks.

Temperate broadleaf and mixed forests: These forests are found in humid areas with an average temperature of 41-59 degrees Fahrenheit (5-15 degrees Celsius) and 25-60 inches (64-152 centimeters) of rain a year. In many of the forests there is a dry and wet season, but this is not necessary to the forest. These forests have a vast altitude range as well. The forest has four canopies with mature trees taking the uppermost layer, immature trees, shrubs and the groundcover comprising the rest. Oaks, beeches, maples, spruces and firs dominate this forest. They also support a wide variety of animal life.

Temperate Coniferous Forests: These forests have high rainfall and moderate to low annual temperature with a dry and wet season supporting massive trees such as redwoods and sequoias.

Taiga: This is a harsh environment characterized by wide summer to winter temperature variations, low precipitation with a dry and wet season and long winters. The forests are primarily larch, spruce, pine firs and pines with closely or sparsely spaced trees and a mossy, lichen undergrowth on the ground.

Tropical and Subtropical Grasslands, Savannas, and Shrublands: This is semi-arid to semi-humid region with moderate to high average temperatures. Grasses with scattered trees or small shrubs dominate the biome.

Temperate Grasslands, Savannas, and Shrublands: These open areas experience freezing weather during winter and high temperatures during summer. Low grasses and shrubs (steppes) to high grasses and shrubs (prairies) dominate the biome.

Flooded Grasslands and Savannas: These regions are grasslands that flood seasonally and are usually found in tropical or sub-tropical regions.

Montane Grasslands and Shrublands: This zone refers to high altitude treeless, grasslands and shrublands located above the tree line

Tundra: This biome experiences low annual temperatures, short growing seasons with soils which freeze nearly year or year round. The regions are stark and barren supporting little tree growth.

Mediterranean Forests, Woodlands, and Scrub: This is a temperate zone typified by hot dry summers and mild rainy winters. These regions contain a vast array of subzones and mosaic ecosystems from thick forests to open savanna/shrubland in very small areas.

Deserts and Xeric Shrubland: These are arid zones receiving fewer than 10 inches of rainfall a year, and are rocky and sandy and support little life.

Mangrove: These are coastal regions with shrubs and trees growing in flooded salty swamps and sandy soils.

Lake: Lakes are large bodies of waters found inland and fed by one or more rivers.

River Delta: This is a densely vegetated region resulting from the deposition of soils from rivers as they empty into the ocean.

Freshwater: This biome refers to streams, ponds, bogs and rivers fed by underground aquifers, rainwater, or snow/ice melt.

Wetlands: These are areas in which the soil is saturated seasonally or year round, such as marshes, bogs, and swamps.

HABITUATION

This latter section is rather broad. When developing a creature, the CK should give some thought to its habits and lifestyle. Is the creature a carnivore, omnivore, or herbivore? Does it derive nutrition via some other means? The animal must have access to its food source to survive. Also, consider whether or not it is a pack animal or individual, nocturnal, diurnal or acts during the day. What are its major sources of food and how does it gather them? There are many facets of an animal or monsters and their lifestyle to consider.

One of the more important aspects of habituation is diet. Ensure that when placing animals or beasts they have access to their primary food sources. Do not overpopulate an area with so many carnivorous creatures that they could not reasonably survive. Do not cluster an area with bizarre animals as to force you to design an entire food chain. Rather, have the monsters a part of the food chain, by replacing a predatory species such as the lion, with that animal/monster. Make sure that the environment can sustain the animal's feeding habits. If griffons eat horses, they should have a ready supply of horses in the area in which they live. Approach every creature with a general scheme in mind. Extreme detail is not necessary nor does it necessarily have to 'work' but it should make some nominal sense in that the environmental setting is coherent.

Variation

Most creatures have variations that allow them to survive in many different biomes or geologic areas. Consider the bear: it's small counterpart in the southern United States to the massive white polar bear found far to the north. Many beasts will have the same variations in their makeup to allow for their survival in different regions. When varying an animal for niches, address primarily its size, coloration, and dietary intake.

HANDLING MONSTER ECOLOGY IN AN ADVENTURE

Monster ecology can enhance a game, adding necessary bits and pieces of flavor to a game's encounter, a running adventure, a set piece campaign, or any other type of adventure. Players appreciate the added flavor and the relation of things within the ecological sphere, even if they do not recognize it. However, it is very easy to overdo the relation of a monster and its ecology to the game. Worry over the possible food sources of creatures that are magical in nature and may not actually need to eat is something that should not slow down or negatively impact the game. Furthermore, it is very easy for a Castle Keeper's ecological classification to become confused in a contradictory mess of information.

Note: If players become sticklers for information and catch the CK in any contradictions or misstatements, it is easy enough to explain the "seeming" contradictions away with monster variants.

MONSTER ECOLOGY

Animals live within certain ranges and climes. A quick purview of ecology shows that certain types of animals inhabit certain regions or environments of the world. Also, creatures such as deer inhabit nearly all continents, they are of varying types, colors, and natures with different habits as is peculiar to their environments. Apply the same concept to monsters. They should have ecological niches in which they live best. Although this can be a broad range, within each range there can and perhaps should be some variability.

The list below discusses some general concepts and covers various monsters and their ecology. The list explores some variations on the theme as well, to indicate adaptive niching, making the same monster somewhat unique to each locations. The discussion below rests on those magical creatures which inhabit a world. Furthermore, the ecologies offered below are merely suggestions. Being magical in nature, these creatures can live anywhere that the Castle Keeper deems fit and in any way the Castle Keeper deems possible. However, remember to give some thought and reason to habituation and variants to allow for a deeper understanding of the world and a more engrossing story telling environment.

Note: These are only ***samples*** that can be used, or expanded upon as needed or desired.

Arrowhawk: The arrowhawk is ecologically acclimated to high altitudes and regions of great electrical discharge. They range widely in and around mountain tops and great mountain ranges. They often roost above the tree line (7,000 feet) along precipitous rocky cliff faces but hunt below the tree line. They prefer hunting small game such as rabbits, grouse, beaver, and similar animals but are not averse to taking down mule deer, young elk, and others. On rare occasions, an arrowhawk hunts larger game. Arrowhawks hunt alone. The arrowhawk is extremely territorial and anyone getting within 100 yards or so of a roosting area is likely to come under attack. These rare creatures roost in packs of 2-5 adults each and attack intruders. Arrowhawks in northern climes tend to have fuller feather mounts and are colored in white and blacks. Those in more southerly climbs are more colorful showing silvers, brown, whites, and even yellow feathers. The northern breeds are larger and more dangerous yet the southern breeds are more violently disposed to guarding their roosting spots, attacking those within several hundred yards of the roosting area.

Assassin Vine: These vines come in many shapes and forms but fall into one family. They survive in well watered loamy soils with low sunlight. They can not survive in areas of extensive sunlight exposure. They can live underground in shallow caves or tunnels as long as they are within 20' of the surface. Boreal forests, coniferous forests and tropical forests all have variations of the assassin vine. In colder climes these plants go dormant during fall and winter and spring forth again in summer and spring. In warmer climes they linger year round. Warmer variations can be very large while their colder cousins tend to be small. They grow in clumps in the cold but individually in the warmer climes. Once a year in the late spring, assassin vines produce 1-2 flowers the nectar from which is a highly valued poison. Assassin vines eat flesh and derive all their sustenance from that so they do not need the sun to survive. Extended cold weather causes them to go dormant and excessive exposure for a long time burns their leaves.

Basilisk: This extraordinary creature can survive anywhere that it can eat. However, cold climes slow its metabolism and can cause it to sleep for years at a time. They prefer to range in drier climates with a lot of sunlight. They often dwell in deserts, savannahs and the like. They like to bask in the sun and when not eating or hunting, look for high places to sit and bask. As a result they often find themselves on rocky outcrops and even amongst the ruins of old fortresses or temples. As night sets, a basilisk often goes into a cave or other structure to keep warm. They have their favorite lairs and remain there for centuries. They do not eat often but when they do go on an eating spree, they eat a lot. Its range is a hundred miles or more. It is not uncommon for several basilisks can inhabit one location, especially during mating season.

Basilisk dark: Because the basilisk is a magical beast, it has various forms and can survive most anywhere. There is a breed of black, deep, or dark basilisk that lives underground. These creatures are extraordinarily violent and aggressive as food is scarce and they take a meal whenever the opportunity presents

itself. They are dark in color and move stealthily and quietly across rock and stone.

Behir: The behir has an extraordinary range, dwelling both above the earth and beneath it, in forests and in deserts. They prefer bodies of water. The behir needs to eat a lot. Its breath weapon works underwater, and is often used to hunt, killing a great deal of marine life. So whether underground or above, the behir is a menace. Behir adapt differently to each clime. Those found in mountainous regions tend to be smaller and grayer in color and very rare; those found in riverine environments and deltas tend to be large but not terribly aggressive. Those found along major river courses surrounded by arid lands tend to be the largest and most aggressive of the kind. They often have coloration matching their environment, with those in forested regions having greenish and pale yellow scales, while those in desert regions have dull brown scales. Underground behir have dark scales and those in the mountains have gray or white scales.

Bullette: The bullette lives in broad open grasslands and savannas. They are rare and often occupy an area of several hundred square miles. On those extremely rare occasions when two bullettes fight over territory, they fight to the death. They prefer drier climates. They do not inhabit those areas with rocky outcrops with significant amounts of rock in the ground, preferring areas with deep soils. Waterlogged areas are not conducive to their survival as they spend so much time underneath the earth. During heavy rainstorms, the bullete comes up from the soil; otherwise they might drown. They must eat a lot but spend about 6 months out of the year hibernating.

Bugbear: Though humanoid and capable of making structures and fires and able to survive in any clime, bugbears are particularly noted for their presence in northern coniferous and boreal forests. Their thick mats of fur are well adapted for cold weather and their temperament bespeaks of that violent and terrifying weather of the north. They are also keenly aware of bears, considered sacred to them, and are often found near or around areas of dense bear populations. The bugbears of the far north tend to be larger than their southern cousin, more aggressive though less inclined to use weaponry in combat.

Centaur: The centaur is associated with glens and groves. They inhabit areas bordering large forests but are primarily on open scrubland, forested plains, and the like. The centaur is able to adapt to most any clime, being intelligent and capable of making fire and houses. Being half horse, they enjoy running and like wide open spaces near their homes. Being reclusive, they prefer to live in copses of trees.

Chimera: This creature can fly, giving it a broad range. It is also very large and carnivorous. It might need or prefer high cliffs on which to nest and open savannas in which to hunt. Considering this, it generally inhabits hills or mountainous regions near savannas or open country. Its range is limited to tropical and temperate savannas. Because it can fly, it does not have to worry about nesting or settling near water at all and can be found, as is often the case, in remote areas. Because they tend to nest in one area for many years, locals tend to attempt to feed them, sometimes building the chimera roosts, and give them treasures as an offering for a protection no normal guard could offer. They eat anything and are not averse to hunting humans or others.

Cloaker: The cloaker is a highly intelligent creature whose origins and methods of procreation, if any, are unknown. They prefer dark places in which to hide. They can survive in any climb or environment as long as it is dark. They can not survive in long exposure to the sun. They enjoy killing intelligent creatures though rarely devour them as they seem to find some type of pleasure in leaving the bodies around and can almost feel the fear and panic these bodies create when found. They can be found in castle sewers, tunnels, and caves.

Cockatrice: These creatures are found in or near open savannahs though sometimes they inhabit forests. As they prefer to eat carcasses, they often follow or are located and nest near major migratory routes. They are not particularly aggressive and they try to avoid combat as much as possible. Most other birds fear the cockatrice and make wide berth of them. They roost on tall limb-filled trees, where they can have a good look around to see if anything nearby is dead or dying. They also roost on rocky outcrops or any other thing that both gives them purchase and elevation. They are not found in high elevations, arctic conditions, jungles or dense forests as their movement is either highly curtailed or the ability to gather food limited.

Couatl: These creatures inhabit very warm climes, jungles or deserts and even savannahs. They are solitary creatures whose origins lie outside the prime material plane. They do not need much sustenance but they must eat. They are carnivorous. When hunting, they usually prefer smaller game. They rarely hunt large intelligent creatures that are armed. They do not like to fight though are formidable foes when engaged in combat. They roost or nest in high places such as in the upper canopy of larger trees, the highest point in a ruin or a rocky precipice. Though not intent upon it, the coutal tends to keep the area in which it lives clear of troublesome creatures

The coutal comes in various shades and colorations. Those in the jungle tend to be brightly colored with glistening scales and many hues while those in the desert have a tendency to have only a few bright colors with a dull sheen. The dry clime coutal are often longer and thinner, while the jungle ones are often more compact and shorter with wider bellies.

Darkmantle: This subterranean hunter is devastating and terrifying. It crawls around deep and expansive caves awaiting prey. They sometimes inhabit remote caves that are small in size. Although the darkmantle dwells underground, they can cross land, though they move slowly and usually only at night. They do best in cavernous complexes that are well trafficked. Since the world beneath is a maze and warren of caves and tunnels and even cities, the darkmantle can find food. Depending upon its local conditions, the darkmantle gravitates towards cave entries (where food is more plentiful) or major passageways where it can drop on and consume the unwary.

Devourer: The devourer inhabits an area between the ethereal, astral, and prime material planes. It frequently travels to the prime as it revels in the destruction of living creatures.

Dragonne: This rare creature is a natural predator for certain small bipedal creatures such as goblins, halflings, gnomes, and the like. As such, this creature, very reclusive and wily as it is, inhabits the fringes of societies and communities inhabited by their favorite prey. More rarely they inhabit forested regions or rolling hills with deep grasses. They are the bane of many communities. They can withstand temperate and subtropical regions but the heat of tropical regions is too much for the normal dragonne.

Dragonne, Tropical: This is a smaller and short haired cousin of the dragonne, found in tropical regions. It has the same general characteristics of its northern cousin but smaller with less hair.

Doppleganger: These creatures live in cities and other places crowded with humanoids. They are often found amongst humans as other races are difficult to mimic and more aware than are humans. In all other respects they act as the people they have chosen to mimic.

Drider: These cursed, but highly intelligent creatures have the habits of both spiders and elves. They have a natural tendency toward solitude though are driven by other needs to find companions, no matter how grotesque. Driders most often live in forested areas far from the habitations of man or elf. Within the forested areas, driders make homes in either the trees or old ruins. Some even go so far as to furnish their quarters and try to live a semblance of their elven side. Driders eat only meat. They prefer it raw and can hardly digest cooked meats. There are driders acclimated to desert realms. These are almost always solitary creatures that live on rocky outcrops or in ruins. They are smaller than their forested cousins.

Dryad: These reclusive and mystical creatures inhabit copses, groves, and even forests. They live where trees grow in some density. They come in varying natures depending upon their clime and the types of trees they live in.

Ettercap: The ettercap lives primarily in southern climes, in thick, old growth forests. There is a more northerly version of the ettercap which has similar characteristics but is smaller. The ettercap builds an array of small web tunnels and web traps and lives in them as if in a house. Being somewhat intelligent, these tunnels are often divided into various functional areas, for example, eating, sleeping, food storage, etc. Ettercaps move often, staying in one place for about a year before going on. They live in small groups. Ettercaps eat virtually any living thing, including worms and flies, and any creature caught in its webs can be considered food. If full, the ettercaps simply cocoon a victim and store him for days or even weeks before eating them. They pile these cocoons in a room they have set aside for food storage. Ettercaps sometimes live in the company of large spiders with whom they have a symbiotic relationship. Ettercaps will eat spiders of any size and spiders will eat ettercaps, as it is a tenuous relationship.

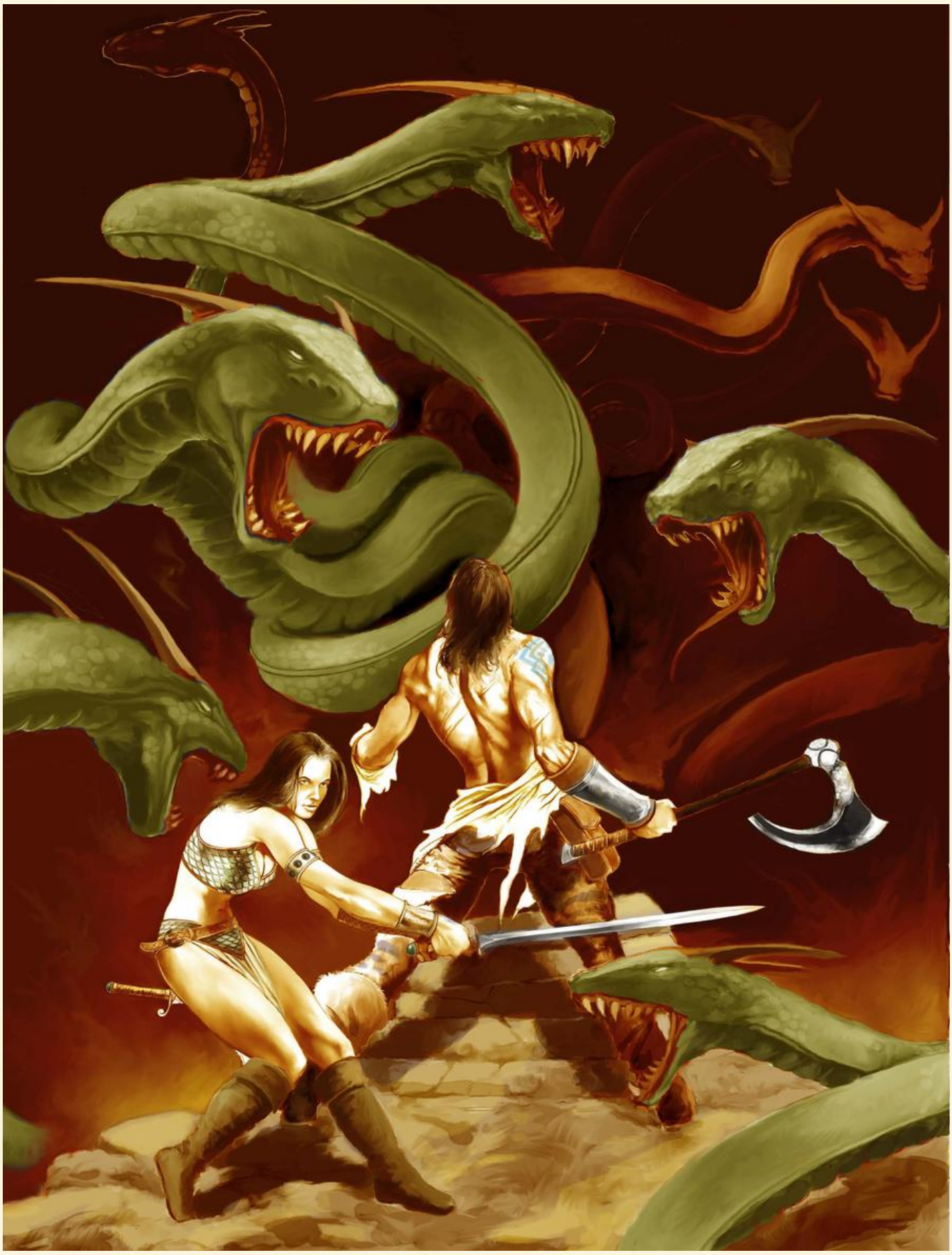
Ettin: Ettins can live virtually anywhere. They are not often found beneath the earth but are particularly fond of cold climates. Being fat and lazy, they often make homes or seek cover anywhere they can, such as the mouths of large caves, beneath overhangs, the interiors of abandoned castles, etc. Only in the rarest of circumstance do they build something. They tend not to linger in one place too long but roam in search of ever easier prey or things to steal and eat. Although dangerous for them, they do come down to civilized lands on occasion to steal cattle or sheep because the domesticated animals taste so good and are rarely difficult to take.

Fleshcrawler: This creature can be found in many variations from tropical to temperate climes. They go through periods of growth in which they become ravenous. During these periods, they can inhabit the body of one person and take control of it. They do this to get close to others and attack them. When they have a full meal plan (about 500 lbs) in meat lying about they begin to gorge themselves. They start out as smaller creatures, perhaps 1 foot or more in length and grow to rather large creatures of up to 6 feet in length. At a certain point they can no longer fake being in control of a medium sized body as they are too big to get in the gut and to the spinal column without exposing themselves. In these cases they start to take down cows and other larger creatures. Many times the fleshcrawler inhabits wild animals as they make easier prey.

Frost Worm: These creatures dwell the length and breadth of the world in the far north or south in snow tundra laden regions. They burrow beneath the earth and lay in wait for their prey. In mountains and hilly regions they burrow through rock, seeking broken slate, cracked shelves and other loose formations within which they can burrow.

Fungus, Violet: Violet fungus is the generic name for a variety of mushrooms found in many temperate and tropical environments. This fungus cannot survive in cold climates such as tundra or high mountain ranges. The fungi are slow movers - perhaps 50 feet a day and a slow grower, perhaps an inch a month. It appears as a patch of mushrooms but is, in reality a single entity connected by fibrous material. It eats anything it can catch in its vines and tendrils. It moves constantly, if slowly. It also leaves a trail of dead material, covered in spores, behind it that can take up to a year to grow into more fungus.

Gargoyle: These beasts once lived in mountainous regions of the world-and often still do. Their nature is such that they are actually lizards and have finely scaled skin, chameleon like in power. The scales can take on the color and to some degree the texture of the stone around them. They are also semi-intelligent creatures. Cities of stone became favored haunts for gargoyles after a time as they could sit and blend into the surroundings fairly well. When statues were created this became even more easy. And when bas relief or statuettes of gargoyles (in a fruitless effort to scare away gargoyles) became common, the gargoyle



relished the city or like environs. They are still found in the mountains where their ability to stand stock still and blend into the rock around them makes them difficult to see. They also linger amongst ruins and any edifice of rock.

Gargoyles inhabit most any clime though each is adapted to their local environment and rock types. Those found in deserts tend to be brownish with a sandy texture while those in the mountains tend to be grayer with a sharp and angular shape to their skin.

Gargoyles are voracious eaters but take a keen liking to the various humanoids of the world-orc, human, elf, goblin and the like. They are indiscriminate in their killing and eating, having no innate prejudices. After feasting in one area, the gargoyles have a tendency to move on to another area for fear of reprisal. However, if the region or city they are in is crowded and has so many people that they can go unnoticed for a time, they remain longer. Gargoyles are adapted to high and low altitudes. They can not survive underwater. Temperature does not seem to affect them.

Gelatinous Cube: This creature is related to the fungi of the world. It has adapted to life underground. Rather than a stationary fungi, this large clump of fungal material moves through caves and caverns scouring the life out of it and eating or consuming everything in its path except metal and stone. It is a very dangerous fungi as it can rot and dissolve everything if it lingers long enough in one spot. This fungi spreads though the underworld by people or others who travel from place to place and carry its spore with them. The spore can live for long periods but if ever exposed to daylight it dies almost immediately. Anything the gelatinous cube touches has some spore smeared on it. Often the cube eats its own spore, only those creatures which contact it and get away can carry the spore on.

Genie: The genie, or djinni, is summoned to the prime material plane and only rarely travels there of their free will. They are solitary beings on the prime and can be found anywhere as they travel wherever they want and usually for a reason. The djinni also has a peaceful realm of sumptuous palaces, where the streets are truly paved with gold. The efreeti is much like the djinni except they are evil of mind and bent on the destruction of much of that around them. The efreeti come from a place of fire and destruction.

Cloud, Giant: Cloud giants generally live in the high mountains, building palatial mansions upon the slopes of peaks lost in the clouds. Few cloud giants, very powerful, dwell in the clouds, building their homes in floating fortresses. They inhabit remote areas preferring only the company of their kind and a few animals. They can live in most any clime, though they prefer cooler climates and old forests or large mountains.

Fire, Giant: Fire giants enjoy the heat born of fire, hence they are often found in areas of high volcanic activity whether in the arctic or in the jungle. They often carve homes out of rock and volcanic material near open vents.

Frost, Giant: Frost giants live in the tundra and wasted lands of ice and snow. The do not find the hot lands or tropics at all hospitable. Frost giants build grand fortresses deep in ice fissures and cracks or caves. Rarely are these places finished with wood and stone. They hunt and kill most anything in their range but prefer hunting larger beasts such as mammoth and dragons.

Hill, Giant: These come in many varieties and are the most common of giants. They live in nearly any clime except the most extreme and those areas occupied by other giants. They build simple structures of stone or wood in which to dwell but are not unknown to have large elaborate castles or at the other end to live in caves. They hunt bovine, boar, and deer as their favorite meat. They have no domesticated animals excepting large wolves and often prey upon human settlements to gather cows and pigs.

Stone, Giant: These giants inhabit rocky areas and mountain ranges. They are kin to the hill giants and much like them though simpler in needs. They dwell in caves and natural formations, which offer shelter, though they are so little affected by inclement weather that they prefer the outdoors. They do not dwell in one place for long but move from valley to valley once they have scared away or cleared out most game. They avoid contact with other giants. It is rare that they attack civilized settlements as the undertaking is not worth the risk but they do guard their valleys as if home and fight hard to keep people out.

Storm, Giant: These are the most reclusive and rare of giants. They are highly industrious and intelligent and build magnificent fortresses in remote mountains, forests and even underneath the ocean. They hunt for pleasure as many have domesticated animals to give them food. They prefer not to have contact with others.

Gibbering Mouther: As with many creatures of this nature, the gibbering mouther lives deep underground or in those places the sun never shines. Because of their voracious appetites, they have a tendency to live in or around underground cities or places nearby such that they always have a source of food. But even so, they are still reclusive and take to hiding and slinking back into the corners of their lairs so as not to be seen. Some larger cities have gibbering mouthers in their sewers to act as cleaners. This is dangerous as they do propagate and can quickly get out of control coming up onto streets late at night to eat. Things consumed by the mouther usually pass into the Wretched Plains. Though they eat a lot, they can, if they must, go many years without eating anything as they are magical beasts and have no real need of food. When inactive they go into a deep hibernation and appear as nothing other than a clump muddy fungal material.

Ghast: These undead are found in unconsecrated grounds or cursed grounds. The ghast rarely leaves the area it haunts. They arise from bodies of the dead of their own volition where a great deal of suffering has occurred.

Ghost: These creatures haunt unconsecrated grounds where the suffering of at least one person has been significant and without a proper burial.

Ghoul: These undead inhabit areas where many dead have lain in the ground and never received proper consecration. They only dwell in those areas where many creatures have died. They also express the unfulfilled lusts of man and devour everything they can.

Gnoll: Gnolls inhabit most temperate climes though they are most often found in open savannas and prairies; more rarely they inhabit lightly forested regions bordering the savannas. They contend with many creatures for territory but are at a distinct disadvantage against most intelligent humanoids. As such, they avoid contact with them except when they appear vulnerable. They are most commonly encountered by caravans or small groups traveling over the open grasslands. Gnolls generally hunt small to medium game and attack humanoids only to replenish weapons and armor or other supplies as they make none of their own

Gnomes: Gnomes naturally inhabit small hilly regions with fertile land that is well watered and forested. However, intimate contact with other humanoids has changed this such that they often dwell in cities and towns. Though usually they prefer living in fairly secluded homogeneous settlements there are significant numbers who no longer do. Gnomes tend to small amounts of agriculture but have settlements small enough that they derive the significant amounts of their resources from their environment through hunting and gathering. Not innately aggressive, gnomes actively protect the lands which they consider theirs.

Goblins: These hardy and clever creatures have adapted to almost every clime so they can be found in swamps, jungles, temperate forest, glacial wastelands, etc. As long as the goblin has an even moderate amount of food on which to survive, it can overcome its environmental circumstances. Goblins can and will eat anything and can derive some small amount of nutrition from it. Even the wood from trees offers the goblin a source of nourishment. They prefer meats but are not bent on getting it at all costs. Some goblins keep small livestock for food but they are, in all, poor managers of animals. Goblins are also slightly different in appearance depending upon their environment. Those in northerly climes or cold areas tend to be squat and stocky while those in southern climes tend to be tall (for goblins) and thin. Their appearance ranges the gamut between those sizes, with skin coloration differing as well.

Gorgons: Gorgons range forested regions at the foothills of many mountain chains. They drink lots of water and need shade to keep them cool as they heat up fairly quickly. However, they do enjoy basking in the sun for a few hours every day. Well watered, forested foothills afford the best environment for them. They also live in caves or overhangs. Gorgons typically hunt out their environment fairly quickly so move fairly often. Some have taken up wide ranging habitats covering several hundred miles. The gorgon does not use their breath weapon that often, as it takes down most of its prey through normal means. It has no known natural predator.

Green Slime: This odd creature is an alga that moves and eats organic matter. It can eat just about any organic matter, but prefers fibrous woody material, the denser the better. Often encountered in forests, they do inhabit cities and towns where it can be very invasive, eating dead wood and other similar material. But it is not a picky eater and will eat other things as well. Green slime reproduces by consuming animals. It can be any type of animal which it can kill, but a green slime can only create one at a time, and looks to kill things in the 200lbs range, the minimum necessary to reproduce. As such, it occasionally drops on humans or humanoids. It does not normally attack children, gnomes, kobolds, etc. It feels no fear. A side effect of its acidic body is its food sources, as it can devour weapons, shields and other armors.

Griffons: These creatures live on high mountain peaks or the front ranges of mountains which overlook vast plains or grasslands. They are ferocious hunters of deer, elk, bovine and similar animals but they enjoy horse meat above all other foods. They are highly territorial but only fight or scare away creatures which pose a direct threat to their food sources. They will engage and clear out lions, wolves, bears and other large predators to keep their range open. They roost close to one another. They are highly intelligent for animals and once managed, easier to train than horses or donkey or even dogs. They are also a wild proud animal and not averse to turning on cruel masters.

Annis, Hag: These are large cannibalistic females who love to eat raw human flesh. They are often found alone and wander most temperate and tropical climes near human habitations to get food. They have a tendency to move a great deal. In order to better gather food they occasionally travel in the company of ogres, trolls, orcs, etc. They are often in command or are high up in the command of these groups.

Green, Hag: They are similar to the annis except they inhabit streams, rivers, and swamps.

Night, Hag: The night hag is the most foul of all hags. They are consumed inside and out with the desire for elf and human flesh. This can never fulfill their longing and it plagues their immortal lives. They inhabit virtually any clime or terrain or location. As with the other hags, they live close to human habitations in order to fulfill that lust. However, they are even more reclusive and wary than the other hags, building lairs deep underground or in remote abandoned castles or keeps.

Harpy: The harpy has a preference for the tangled woods of young temperate hardwood forests and scrublands. They inhabit many climates but prefer to hunt in arid or semi-arid hill land. The trees offer a place to nest while the open scrubby hills allow them to hunt and see their prey better. However, harpies can inhabit many other climates. Harpies are carrion eaters and hunt for and eat dead animals. On rare occasions, they will actively hunt humans and halflings, as they really enjoy the flesh. When

they have spotted one (and they spend a great portion of the day flying round), they try to entice their erstwhile victims with the use of their songs. They also like baubles such as gems and jewelry. Knowing that certain creatures are wont to carry these items, they attempt to bring them to their lair as well.

Hell hound: These summoned animals thrive in almost any climate or terrain. The hell hound is more intelligent than its canine counterparts and because of this frequently escapes captivity where they serve powerful masters as guardians. Once escaped into the wild, the hell hound hunts and kills indiscriminately. They have no need of actual sustenance and therefore kill for the sheer pleasure and evil of it.

Hippogriff: These creatures inhabit the highest mountain peaks from which they descend to hunt. They have a preference for mountain goat and other animals that roam the highlands. They herd in greater numbers in very high upland flats. They are not excessively territorial except when griffons come around. The only time they enter into a fight willingly is when someone approaches their nest and young are in it.

Hobgoblin: Hobgoblins, like many humanoids, can be found nearly everywhere, but have a preference for wooded areas, hills, and low mountain ranges. They eschew frigid climes (though some are adapted to it) and tropical climes. They rarely inhabit arid environments.

Homunculus: Created by wizards and as such they dwell almost anywhere that a wizard may have been. They have no environmental preference. They do not need to eat and can live for ages beyond count. Once freed of their master they have a tendency to visit their grief on the race of the one who created them so move around looking for them.

Hydra: These are solitary creatures preferring places far from the confines of man, elf, or orc. They live in tropical to arid environments and from forests to desert, in secluded regions. They have large ranges and hunt and scavenge for food. They do not actively protect their range though they do protect their lairs. They have a habit of bringing their food back to their lair for consumption. There are those who capture hydras and place them in specific spots and feed them to keep them there. It only takes a few feedings for the hydra to begin considering the lair as their own. They like to lair up in a dry cave or will build up elaborate nesting areas to help keep them dry should no cave or such be available.

Imp: These are summoned creatures brought to the prime material plane to serve wizards or others of like ilk. Thus they live anywhere a wizard might have brought them. They are fairly impervious to harsh climatic conditions but drift to mountainous or hilly regions or along lakes and along the seaboard as they like to fly. Though they do not eat, they are thoroughly evil and intelligent and enjoy, immensely, seeing other intelligent creatures in pain.

Invisible Stalker: This is a summoned creature that inhabits anywhere a wizard or other of their ilk may have summoned them. If left alone they drift to airy regions of great altitude or near lakes and the ocean for they love to float with the wind.

Jaculus: These creatures are most often found in a tropical rainforest or forest with tall canopies. They enjoy nesting high in the tress and floating down for a kill. Because they have few natural enemies they are not averse to trying to take down medium sized creatures and will attack humans. They have a tendency to cluster in areas creating a large family of them.

Kobold: There are several distinct varieties of the kobold. There are those acclimated to a life underground (dark skinned) the tropics (bright green) and the forests (mottled grays and browns) but in all other respects are similar in nature. The kobold inhabits all those climes. They do not like colder areas or arid environments. They hunt small animals but are not averse to getting together and taking down large animals with devious traps and poisons. They are fairly nomadic, getting up and moving every couple of years. They have a tendency to move into old ruins or cavern complexes where they don't have to do much work to make them habitable but they do make their own villages on occasion. These generally consist of round huts on raised platforms. They are territorial and very protective of their lairs, attempting to kill or deter people before getting to their lair.

Kraken: These massive creatures live in the deep oceans, massive lakes, or gargantuan underground pools. They need a lot of space and food to live. They will hunt each other out, excepting females. Though they do not need to come to the surface for air, they do approach the oceans and lake surfaces on occasion looking for food. They are known to ply shipping lanes because of the ease of food generation from capsized boats.

Lamia: These are solitary creatures inhabiting lonely spots in wildernesses or any place they can hold sway over the inhabitants; sometimes holding sway over whole, if small, cities. They keep vast menageries so have need of large spaces. They revel in the slaughter of their foes (everyone) and in causing fear in them. More often than not, as a result of their rather unsociable manners, they live in remote places or in ruins of palaces where it would be difficult to find them.

Lammasu: The lammasu is only found in hot climes, be they arid or tropical. They are generally solitary creatures though they do keep one another company on occasion, sharing their knowledge and exchanging information. They take up residence in abandoned places for the most part as they do not build anything themselves. They have a preference for ruins with high towers where they make their quarters and can take off aloft to fly about. They are aggressively territorial, attempting to empty their region, which can be considerable at times, of evil creatures, interlopers or anyone who might give away their location or cause problems. They hunt and devour small game in their region.

Lich: These rare creatures inhabit the haunt of a wizard after death, protecting its phylactery. However, they can travel far

from their phylactery and in the later stages of their lives, are wont to do so, knowing that their phylactery is safe. They do not need to eat but they do need to kill things. In these cases they are known to gather a large army of the undead and march off to war.

Lizardfolk: These creatures inhabit many tropical, semi-tropical, and more rarely temperate climes. They do have a preference for the tropical or warmer climes, but don't like arid environments. They hunt their area and but are not aggressive about cleaning out everything in it. They hunt small game animals for the most part. When some creature encroaches upon their immediate territory, they do defend it. Also, they are nomadic and when they resettle they may do so in moderately inhabited lands which they would then consider their own. They also find the domesticated animals of orcs, humans, and others easy prey and are highly sought after.

Locathah: These creatures live underwater in shallow seas and along coral reefs. They are adapted to saltwater, though there is a fresh water variety that travels in smaller numbers. They live in small villages built along coral reefs and hunt in or around the reef. They can go on land for a few hours at a time and will hunt or attack people on land on occasion. They capture for small animals they consider exotic and attack those they consider interlopers. They only inhabit semi-tropical to tropical waters, as colder waters are too frigid for them to survive.

Lycanthropes: These creatures live in the environment in which they were created. They take on both the life of their original form and that of the form into which they were turned.

Manticore: Manticores are voracious hunters and wanton killers, roaming scrublands and other sparsely vegetated but well watered areas. Manticores tend to dwell near water but enjoy the openness of scrubland in which to do their hunting. Manticores range widely over their territory. They actively hunt out other predatory species including humanoids if possible. They are very aggressive and, having few natural competitors, possess little fear. They hunt large animals in their range, leaving small animals alone. They are dusk hunters as well and often fly up and down riverbeds and along lake edges looking for prey. Large prey are shredded and eaten on the spot but medium sized prey is carried to their lairs for devouring later. If nursing young, the manticore brings as much back to the lair as possible. They inhabit large precipitous rocky outcrops, as those are the only things that can bear their weight and the weight of the carrion they often carry up there.

Medusa: These cursed women or men dwell in many places as they usually inhabit the places they once lived or, in other cases, some power has moved them or run them out of their homes, in which case they take up residence in some abandoned fortress, tower, or the like. There they usually remain for the rest of their exceptionally long and cursed days, pining away for their lost beauty and taking revenge upon others who happen their way. Occasionally, medusa travel to inhabited lands to wreak havoc and pain amongst the inhabitants of the region.

Merfolk: The merfolk reside underneath the sea. There is a freshwater and saltwater variety, each unable to live in the other's environment and each taking on particular colorations or appearances, but both following the same type lifestyle. Merfolk live in small villages built of coral and rock along the rocky outcrops and coral reefs of the continental shelves. They live in both tropical and subarctic climes. They range widely in the ocean and along their reefs eating fish and other small aquatic creatures. They are reclusive and shy and not given over to contact with the outside world. It is rumored that there are merfolk live at the very deepest part of the world in vast cities near volcanic ridges where the water is warmer. They aggressively defend their home area from interlopers who might give away their location. They also tend to travel to shipping lanes in search of sunken ships from which they gather various goods they value, such as glass.

Mimic: Mimics are intelligent creatures who dwell underground. They propagate by splitting once they get large enough. They have no eyes as such but can sense the heat of living creatures and feel their vibrations. They also have a minor telepathic ability allowing them to sense the intelligence of a creature, but just in a general sense, realizing if their target creature has animal, average, or genius intelligence. They have a tendency to attack small creatures and especially animals which scurry underground. They travel slowly but do migrate. Sometimes they take the form of a rug or other pliable item that an intelligent creature may pick up and carry and use them as transport. They are not vulnerable to sunlight but prefer darker places as it is easier to mimic things. For creatures that sense heat, this is not at all possible. There are rumors of congregations of mimics who can take on the appearance of a whole room full of furniture.

Minotaur: These horrible creatures dwell in labyrinthine environments - tunnels beneath the earth or mazes above ground and even in tangled forests and along mountain trails and paths. They prefer these locales because they have an uncanny sense of direction and hardly ever get lost and use the maze like effects or mazes of their environment to trick and trap their foes. They eat any flesh but have a preference for human meat, finding it delectable. They do range widely outside their lairs to hunt for food. They dwell in most any environment except arid regions, savannas, and similar areas. A variety of albino minotaur is known to live in the high mountains and northern reaches of the world.

Mummy: Mummies inhabit any locale where the dead are buried and swathed. These are culturally specific restrictions and not ones of environment.

Naga: These creatures are summoned to the prime material plane to serve any number of purposes. As such, they dwell in any locale or environment.

Nightmare: The nightmare dwells on the prime material as an extraordinary event. They are summoned to the plane to serve in certain functions. They do not feel the effects of hunger thus they never need to eat. When they come to this plane they do so for a reason that usually involves killing something.

They also do not feel the effects of weather so can live in any environment. They do not linger long on the prime material unless requested by those who summon them. If freed, they go back to their plane.

Nymph: Nymphs reside in clear pools, ponds and streams in sylvan environments. They typically reside in tropical to temperate, well watered environments where the water never freezes over as this can trap them underwater. They keep their streams pure by keeping all animals at bay. Nymphs are vegetarian and eat fruits, nuts and the like. They have a good sense of what is good to eat or not. In general, they only charm people in order to make them leave wherever they are located. They never sleep so are active in the day and night.

Ogre: Ogres inhabit the entire world. They have adapted to every single climate above ground and even below ground. They live in one place for a few years at a time before moving on unless they have a gainful source of food from raiding or orc thralls or some such. As for themselves, they do not practice any kind of agrarian activity. They hunt and enjoy randomly killing things. Even though ogres can live everywhere, they prefer hilly regions or mountains that have many caves for shelter. They prefer forests to savanna as it provides more material for them. They do not settle near humans, elves, or gnomes but will settle near orcs and goblins as they are inclined to get along well.

Ogre Magi: These ogres are found in vast open regions and make lairs in old ruins or temples. They travel alone and live off the land. They enjoy hunting humans, elves, gnomes, and halflings in particular.

Ooze, Black Pudding: The black pudding is a blob of acidic material that moves slowly through the underworld consuming everything it can. They attack without recourse every living thing with which they come into contact. They are usually found in moderately well traveled, large, cavernous areas but have been intentionally transported to smaller complexes. They can go many years without eating but do eventually starve to death. They can travel underwater as well. Direct sunlight dries these creatures out fairly quickly, losing 1 hit point per hour. When they die they become calcified chunks of rock about half their original size. These asexual creatures split during the reproductive process. They do not sleep.

Ooze, Gray: These oozes are rare and found in only the most remote areas of the underworld, though as with many types of ooze, others have intentionally transported them to other areas. They do not move around much but instead have a tendency to wait in one place for many years to catch a foe. They reproduce by splitting. When they die they become calcified pieces of rock that look like mudflows. They are sensitive to direct sunlight and lose 1-4 hit points per hour when exposed.

Ooze, Ochre Jelly: These creatures dwell in remote cavern complexes. Though one only finds a few in a small area, where there is one, there are others. They tend to congregate in regions

of caverns and move as groups, though always remaining widely dispersed. They reproduce by splitting. When they die, they become calcified pieces of rock that look like mudflows. They are sensitive to direct sunlight and lose 1-4 hit points per hour when exposed.

Orc: The orc is encountered anywhere. They are one of the most adaptable of the humanoids. They also can eat anything, deriving sustenance from the barest of foods. They hunt or grow crops or raise animals, pigs being their favorite. They can use horses and boars as steeds, along with many other animals. They can live alone, in thorps, cities or travel as nomadic tribes. There seems to be no limit to the orc's capacity to adapt and survive. They also breed like roaches leading to staggering food supply problems, which plays into their aggressive expansionist tendencies.

Otyugh: This subterranean creature is encountered in many places throughout the world, but always underground. They are scavengers and eat any dead or decaying material. They do not attack or hunt to gather food and only fight when pressed. When fed they are remarkably docile creatures. When threatened, cornered or confined with others in a small space, they are remarkably deadly. When left to wander, they do not establish a range but rather wander aimlessly looking for something to eat. Should one particular area be fairly productive, for example a sewer outlet, cesspool or pit where dead are thrown, they linger, expecting food. It is possible, through a combination of starvation and torture, that they can become very aggressive.

Owlbear: These pack animals hunt and roam in remote areas of thick young growth, coniferous or deciduous, temperate to subarctic forests. There is a smaller, less hairy version found

in subtropical environments but it is just too hot in southerly climes. The owlbear hunts at dusk and in the early morning when animals are bedding down. They have only one competitive species with which they routinely deal, the bear, and as such, are afraid of nothing. They roam and have no lairs except in winter when they hole up in caves near the cave mouth. When hibernating, several can be found in one cave.

Pegasus: This rare creature has removed itself to the most remote areas of the world. It prefers, despite being an avian creature, to live in or around plains or savannas. In these areas, it will roost in hilly areas or where there are hidden or deep ravines. They avoid contact with humanoids as they are often taken into slavery as mounts (where most die). They eat grass like horses and enjoy grazing in open pastures. There are some who live in highland plateaus but usually move to lower elevations in winter for forage. The winged stallions are encountered in many environments but prefer subtropical to temperate regions.

Phase Spider: Phase Spiders prefer dark, cool, moist environments. There are two varieties; a subsurface variety and a surface variety. On the surface, the phase spider is only found in thick forested regions, swamps, marshes, or riverine environments. They do not live in high elevations or in tropical, sub-tropical arctic or subarctic conditions. The subterranean versions can live virtually anywhere underground so long as there are ample food supplies. They do not live near actively volcanic areas.

Both varieties of phase spiders, however, have the same basic patterns of living. They can weave elaborate webs though rarely do, as they "live" in the ethereal plane and use the prime material plane to hunt. They use the webs to store food for once they kill something, if they do not eat it, they cocoon it and store it. Phase spiders stay in one area for a long time or until its food sources dry up. Although phase spiders do not hunt together they do congregate in small numbers. These groups are often the sign of a region where phase spiders have become an infestation. Phase spiders eat one another should they get hungry enough.

Pseudodragon: These rare creatures generally inhabit old growth forests with vast majestic trees stretching hundreds of feet into the sky. They do not live in areas of extreme heat and cold, such as tropical, sub-tropical and arctic or sub arctic conditions. They also do not like arid landscapes. They are not voracious eaters and are selective hunters. They live in small family groups and range over a wide area. They nest high up in trees for safety and do not make their presence known should a threat appear.

Purple Worm: These creatures live deep underground in only the most massive of caverns. However, they burrow as well and dig long passages underneath the earth looking for fertile ground in which to find prey. The miners of the world hate and fear the purple worm. They dig large tunnels stretching many miles underneath the earth making mining easier. Encountering one can be very deadly. Purple worms are endlessly hungry and can eat anything, though they derive nutrition only from living things. The rest they grind into dust. They rarely rest in one place but keep moving, burrowing, and eating. As temperatures underground are fairly constant, purple worms dwell in any subterranean place except those near volcanic activity. They also avoid water as they can drown rather easily.

Quasit: This is a demon summoned to the prime material plane. It does not need to eat and generally lives only in those areas where it summoned.

Rakshasa: These creatures dwell in southerly climes, preferring warm tropical or humid environments. They generally only live in remote palaces or, on very rare occasions, in disguise, in highly populated cities.

Rat, Giant: This rat inhabits all climes and biomes.

Remorhaz: These creatures inhabit regions of extreme cold. Arctic conditions are generally the only ones in which they can survive. They live in ice caves or burrow into ice and snow and live in deep burrows. Although massive, these creatures do not need to eat often, but when they do, they eat a great deal. They comb sea coasts for dead whales, walruses, and other large carrion to eat. Otherwise they hunt bear. They also swim though they do not stay in the water for long, nor can they go to great depths. While swimming, they hunt for whales, dolphins, seals and other animals.

Roc: Rare and wonderful, the Roc roosts in high mountains, their nests are almost always near great open planes or savannahs where they hunt. They can travel a staggering distance in one day. They hunt massive creatures such as elephant and large ox, elk, or other animals of like nature. They avoid tropical environments as the game is not often as large as they need it to be. Those living on or near the coast hunt in water much as eagles do except they can catch large fish, very large fish. They are day hunters and rarely go out at night.

Roper: The roper is a rare creature found in caverns underneath the earth. They attack almost anything that moves within range of their web of arms. As they can stand rock-still they are difficult to notice minus a pile of decaying dead in the caverns in which they live. As with many subterranean creatures, they sleep or go into hibernation for long periods of time and live exceptionally long lives, only becoming active when sources of food approach. Ropers in particular do not eat a lot but they kill everything. They also tend to cluster in areas in caverns and move as groups as well. For a lucky few, witnessing a migration of 30 or so ropers can be a magnificent site.

Rust Monster: This creature resides deep under the earth, where it dines upon a diet of metal. They transform metal into a food they can digest. The contents of their stomach are highly valued and rumored to be the key to transform metal into gold. In any respect, they travel deep underground searching out metal. As they can not burrow, they do have a difficult time feeding themselves and follow behind purple worms and other digging creatures looking for metal. The purple worm in

particular attracts rust monsters as they turn everything to dust and metals are found in the dust trails they leave behind. They can leach iron or gold out of rock to eat. They travel in pairs that mate once a year or so and deliver 2-4 young who strike out into the world on their own at birth. Trainable, they serve as pets for some creatures.

Sahuagin: These creatures dwell in the shallows of saltwater seas. They are cruel creatures who hunt for pleasure and food. They cannot survive at great depths so are most often found around island chains or along the coast. They build villages in coral reefs. They primarily hunt fish. They are generally only active a night. Though they do not live near humans or their coastal settlements, they do enjoy hunting near them.

Salamander: The salamander is not native to the prime material plane. It comes from the plane of fire. The salamander needs heat and therefore lives by active volcanoes or any place which emits great amounts of heat such as in rifts and geothermal areas whether above or below the earth. Water does not affect them and they cannot drown so they can live in the depths of the ocean near volcanic activity or geothermal venting areas. If they stray too far from these places for too long, they begin to suffer from exposure. They do not need to eat in the traditional sense, as they consume heat, so they do not hunt but they do have an unending desire to kill and cause pain.

Satyr: The satyrs live in temperate forests and arid or semi-arid places. The forests they choose can be sparse or dense, as to them it doesn't matter. However, they do prefer more remote forests. They live in small family groups, clans, or sometimes small tribes though even in these cases, their individual living places are spread out from one another (half a mile or so). Satyrs hunt small game, preferring to eat their catch raw. Despite this, depending on their wealth they can have rather lavish lifestyles, living in small woodland houses, laced with silver decorations. They are the consummate revelers, almost always gathering in sacred places to dance and sing and play their flutes. They tend to drink and eat to excess. They have a particular fondness for human women and seek to enchant them and entice them back to their forested homelands to bemuse them.

Screecher: These unusual plants grow underground. They are reminiscent of mushrooms though are not a fungus. They need a little soil and a cool environment to grow in but react rather poorly to light and will die if exposed to sunlight for 24 hours or more. The screecher is a medium sized plant growing up to two feet in height. It roots rather deeply and its roots follow cracks in the stone looking for soil. They propagate by spores and the roots can actually grow into another plant. When disturbed, they emit a loud screeching sound as an air sac in the bole of the plant begins opening and closing. This survival method works well underground as it scares off a lot of creatures. It has also led to its cultivation by gardeners for the plant is highly valued in the world above as a good 'watch' plants. Its exotic look/colors and difficult growing conditions make it somewhat desirable for a host of people. One can even find it in planters.

Shadow: Shadows live anywhere there have been dead or near any gateways to the Wretched Plains. There are many manifestations of shadows. Anything that has a soul and can feel remorse can become a shadow. They tend to inhabit lonely abandoned places, though on occasion they drift into cities, or manifest there, haunting the darkened alleys and twisted streets seeking to assuage their agony.

Shadow Mastiff: The shadow mastiff is not native to the prime material plane. Others usually summon the creatures for guards, pets, hunting hounds or the like. They often escape or are left to their own devices and roam free over the country. They do not need to eat and can live in any climate. They often travel in the company of greater evil creatures who summon them for hunting prey. They tend to be single minded and follow the general instructions of those who summoned them.

Shambling Mound: This amorphous creature lives in swamps, wetlands, and low-lying areas that are well watered. They inhabit tropical to southern latitude temperate environments. They do not dwell in arctic, sub-arctic, or even northern climes, as they can die if the water they are in freezes over. They can not survive underground for long as they need some sunlight to survive. They are fairly benign creatures, only hunting small prey that walk into them, unless they are threatened. As they can take the shape of muck and mire and look just like a muddy pile of water, they are virtually indistinguishable from the surrounding landscape. One can walk right through one without it ever doing anything or the characters even knowing. As such, they can be found near human habitations, in moats for example, and go undetected for a long time.

Skeleton: Skeletons dwell throughout the world, in any climate or biome in which vertabrates live.

Spectre: This odd undead creature is not bound to any particular place though they have their preferences. Their lives they spent in the quest for knowledge; in death they continue this pursuit of knowledge though their minds are twisted with evil. They dwell in libraries, universities, and any place where great knowledge is stored in tomes or books which they can access. Since they can be reasoned with and have, as their primary goal a desire to escape death or continue with their pursuit of knowledge, they are not always intractable. They can be found traveling from place to place or can even be found in remote barren wildernesses pursuing their never-ending quest or looking for a person who can impart that knowledge upon them.

Sphinx, Andro: This creature prefers desolate arid regions where they can take flight and see a long way off. They are extremely intelligent, proud, and egotistical; as such they avoid the company of others. They hunt a wide variety of large animals which they consume on the spot. They are territorial and seek to kill other predators in their area. They also seek to keep their homes and lairs secret and even go so far as to kill interlopers in the area. They hunt during the day having little to fear and their prey being generally easy to catch. They range over a very wide

area. They inhabit old ruins and have been known to cause places to be abandoned in order to inhabit them.

Sphinx, Crio: These creatures live in remote areas but, being greedy, love to rob caravans. They are intelligent herbivores. As such they prefer savannas and uplands where they do not have much to worry about in the way of predators. They like to nest atop large mounds or in the hills low to the ground but not on the ground. They infinitely prefer old ruins as they offer the best protection from the elements, are often defensible and offer a place where they can store their stolen treasures.

Sphnix, Gyno: These are the most intelligent and wily of the sphinxes. They prefer hot arid environments in which to roam and often take up residence in abandoned keeps or towers. They have a love for beautiful jewelry and go to great lengths to gather the gems and precious stones they find so fascinating. Though they do not live near the byways of man or elf, they do travel to them in order to speak with others and gather what tidbits of knowledge they desire. They offer trade using their gems and jewels for information they find interesting or pertinent. They inhabit old forts or palaces. They have a preference for large airy palaces and find towers and small buildings far too constricting.

Sphnix, Hieraco: This is the most feared of the sphinxes. They are aggressive, territorial, range widely and attack without mercy or care. These creatures, like their cousins, prefer arid open landscapes in which to hunt. They hunt primarily at dusk and dawn resting during the day in the lairs or nests or near their prey. These creatures range over hundreds of miles and attack large prey in small packs. Though they have no particular preference for human, elf or dwarf meat, they will hunt them down as well to keep them out of their territory, if in small enough numbers (10 at most). They have been known to attack small farmsteads as well, taking sheep and cattle, as they are such easy prey.

Spiders: These beasts live just about anywhere as they inhabit all but the coldest environments and the highest altitudes. They also live underground. The only important thing is that spiders have something to eat to support their size.

Sprites: These rare creatures tend to live in remote places where they are little bothered by men.

Sprite, Grigs: These fey enjoy remote temperate forests and broken hill lands where they enjoy the company of other fairies, especially satyrs. They are entirely nocturnal, sleeping away the daylight hours in the boles of trees, underneath large rocks or in the mouths of caverns or overhangs. They build homes beneath old trees. These places are difficult to find but are often elaborate structures. The tree is usually very healthy as the grigs see to its care. Here, they brew their beers and wines for revelry-which is a nightly affair. Grigs eat small spiders, worms, and slugs and though lacking in appeal, they cook them in such spices as to become delicious.

Sprite, Nixie: These inhabit ponds, lakes, and streams in tropical to subarctic conditions. Those in the northern parts of the world tend to migrate south in the colder season before the waters begin to freeze. They prefer remote places but in their travels they occasionally settle near human habitations or in populated areas, largely because they enjoy enchanting human fishermen and the like. They eat fish raw. They are active during the day and night preferring to rest in the late afternoon and very late at night. They rarely come to the surface or move over dry land unless migrating or going somewhere to enchant a human.

Sprite, Pixie: These brilliant fey are some of the rarest. Not only because they choose not to be found, but because there are so few of them, and they are difficult to find. They live in remote old growth forests. They search out some of the most beautiful and idyllic lands in the known world, there they remain out of sight for lifetimes. They make small villages in the trees and

eat natural fruits and berries. They are not found in northerly climates but only along the southern fringes of temperate zone and in sub-tropical or tropical environments. They are active in the day and at night. Often their villages, when spotted, are mistaken for clusters of fireflies or luminous creatures moving around at night.

Stirge: They are bane of the hills and mountains. This large bee-like bird is extremely aggressive and territorial. They thirst for blood. They are active during dusk and dawn preferring to rest away the afternoon and late night hours. They roost in the boles of rotted trees, old towers, amid rocky outcrops or similar locales. They also need ample water to help digest the blood they take so they live near swamps, lakes, ponds, or streams. They prefer stagnant water to flowing water. They inhabit tropical to temperate areas. There are breeds that live in high altitudes but the lack of stagnant water tends to keep them in lower altitudes and nearer flatlands. A subterranean variety exists but has morphology much like the bat, with leather-like wings, have exceptional hearing and are nearly blind.

Tavis Wyrm: These creatures travel from the elemental plane of fire and have one great need from the prime material plane: rock. The tavis wyrm derives sustenance from the rocks of the prime material plane and worms its way through mountain and hills and the world under the earth in search of particular mineral needs. It rarely comes to the surface and then usually as an accident. They are terrible foes if encountered underneath the earth, as miners and others occasionally do, for they fight without remorse or pity and to the death. They fear nothing. They are active all day and night only stopping to digest food-which in some cases may take up to a month or more, in which case they curl up and sleep.

Tick, Giant: These inhabit northern temperate climes and tropical regions. They do not live at high altitudes. There is a subterranean variety.

Titan: These beings live in castles or palaces far removed from the lands or places of other humanoids; they inhabit every known terrain or biome. They are little involved with the rest of the world but when they are it is usually devastating. Titans are much like humans in their dietary needs. They hunt or even raise animals for food if they want, or they can magically create their own food.

Toad, Giant: These creatures dwell in jungles and temperate forests or even in subarctic conditions. Extremes of weather and high elevations seem to be their only delimiter. They hunt at dusk and dawn and otherwise sleep beneath large logs, piles of leaf debris or in the mouths of caverns.

Treant: Treants dwell anywhere there are trees of such age and stature that they can mix in freely with them. They do not live in elevations above 6,000 feet, glaciated regions, or very arid landscapes, though occasionally they live in oases. Like real trees, treants derive their sustenance from the earth and sun so must remain still for a very long time to feed.

Troglodyte: These creatures inhabit swamps and marshes. They are filthy creatures who live for a long time in the same nesting area amidst all their filth and rot of their captures. They live in huts much like those of a beaver. Entry is gained by going underwater and then inside. Sometimes their huts interconnect making hallways with several rooms. They are carnivorous and eat anything they can get their hands on: fish, turtles, frogs, tadpoles, ants, spiders, birds or if it should be available, humanoid flesh. They drag all their food back to their lair for consumption. They are primarily active at dusk and at night.

Troll: Trolls come in two broad though distinct varieties: the hill and the river troll. The hill troll is an aggressive creature and the larger of the two. It is carnivorous and hunts in lands as disparate as tropical to subarctic, they are rarely found in arctic conditions. They prefer to live in caves or overhangs so they commonly inhabit hilly and mountainous regions. This variety also lives underground. They hunt at night giving rise to the belief they are afraid of sunlight. This is not true, it's just when most of them sleep. They attack all manner of creatures for food. Like a cat, they enjoy toying with their prey before killing it. They eat everything and especially enjoy marrow from the bones. Though usually solitary, they occasionally travel in small hunting packs.

The river troll is a smaller version of the hill troll that is semi-aquatic and able to stay underwater for a day or more before coming up for air. Other than that, it is the same as the hill troll. It lives in underground waterways as long as it has access to air at some place.

Unicorn: The Unicorn is one of the rarest creatures of all and lives in remote grasslands and forests. It does not like high altitudes, cold winters or real hot summers. It enjoys comfort. The unicorn travels freely during the day and rests at night. These creatures find the open and airy ruins of long abandoned temples and palaces to be useful for shelter. The unicorn grazes on grasses and berries found in the woods and plains.

Vampire: Vampires live almost anywhere that undead blood-sucking creatures might thrive.

Wight: Can be found near barrows and burial mounds in any clime.

Will-o-the-wisp: This dark fey lives in remote, forbidding places of great danger. The only attraction to these places is the natural danger of the terrain to those who may pass through it. The will-o-the-wisp likes to augment its powers and seeks to trap its foes in the area it lives and let the land itself do part of the killing. This creature attacks without mercy all those it hates (and it hates nearly everything that thinks). It does not eat or otherwise need any types of food or sustenance. The wisp is generally only active at night. It rarely travels but when it does, it can go near populated areas to cause trouble before moving on to another locale.

Worg: The worg has the same habits as a wolf and inhabits virtually every biome and terrain, though having a preference for grasslands and scrub.

Wraith: These undead exist anywhere as environmental conditions do not restrict them, but these creatures never go near the sun and stay deep in dungeons, crypts, or cavernous burial vaults.

Wyvern: The wyvern, a distant cousin of the dragon, travels in small packs and ranges the world over from very high altitudes in arctic conditions to low altitudes in tropical regions. It hunts incessantly when prowling. Often it kills for the sake of killing and not eating. When a wyvern rests, it does so for many weeks or months at a time, usually after gorging itself. They find airy precipices on which to nest.

Xorn: These creatures are not home to the prime material plane but reside there occasionally. They are used to dig tunnels or for excavating, if in a somewhat circuitous manner. The tunnels they leave behind are often without any organization and simply move from one spot to another where there are clusters of gems and like material. They are not aggressive unless one comes upon them while eating gems and tries to stop them from doing so. Otherwise, they tend to ignore everything excepting those that threaten them. Engaging a xorn is possible as they are intelligent, but one has to learn to speak to them first. They occasionally attack people who are wearing gems and jewels to get to them. They often dwell in subterranean places where they can find their food but occasionally they are in the 'employ' of a great wizard or others and used in siege warfare.

Yrthak: These creatures dwell in the desert or other arid places with sparse vegetation. They are bat-like in many of their habits and nature excepting they are almost always found alone. They mate in vast numbers but only once every 5 years or so. They hunt at night exclusively and den up during the daylight hours. They seek out any small or medium creature and prefer attacking things while they are sleeping or resting. They try to take their prey aloft and drop it only to retrieve it again. This helps to tenderize the meat and kill their prey. They nest in any overhang large enough to hold them.

Zombie: These undead inhabit cemeteries, temple complexes, crypts, and the like. They are mindless and slow moving but become dangerous when in large groups.

ENCOUNTER TABLES

When deciding the appropriate challenge for any given encounter, a good rule of thumb is to base the threat comparatively using the average party level against that of the Hit Dice (HD) of the creature. For most situations, this is likely to work well, but some creatures pose a threat greater than their HD indicates, perhaps due to a powerful ability such as lethal poison or that of regenerating, and others are effectively "weaker" than Hit Dice dictate due to low number of attacks, small encounter size, or inflicting lesser damage than expected. Numbers, too, matter - a meeting with three dragons is much tougher than one, regardless of when it occurs. Further factors worth considering are environment (whether the beast is in its lair, for example), possession of usable magic (either spells or items), sneaky surprises (traps, hazards and the like), conditions (encountered in darkness when the party cannot see, use of extended range missile weapons, etc.), lack of resources (creature requires magic to affect and party has none, or little, available) and so on. Each of these things can cause an ordinary meeting to transform into something far more dangerous. As the Castle Keeper, it is important to remember that it is OK to remind the players they can run, parley, entreat, surrender, or simply avoid an encounter unless thrust upon them in such a way as to make such impossible.

Exceptionally large parties, such as those with 10 or more members, counting hired men-at-arms or pets such as war horses or attack dogs, should be treated as being higher level for purposes of what can be encountered, though they may still lack sufficient means to deal with the increased threat. This is a tricky proposition and one which the Castle Keeper will need to weigh heavily, factoring in not only what the group can do but more so what it cannot and then base the encounter off that decision. For example, a party hires several retainers and enlarges its size to 15 total (all 1st level) individuals. The Castle Keeper decides this band is the rough equivalent of 3rd-4th level adventurers and rolls on Tier II, getting trolls which are met in their own groups of 1d8. Instead of rolling for it, due to the creature's ability to regenerate and the damage output, the CK decides that one or two trolls will suffice. There are no real hard-and-fast "rules" for this as experience will be the best guide. Note, too, that when a high level party challenges much lower HD opposition, there should be many more of them to defeat. For example, a party composed of six 20th level adventurers is likely to have few problems with 1 HD kobolds, but turn that same encounter into several hundred or thousand, and the risk becomes far higher… especially when the monsters fight unfairly.

Beyond these general guidelines, the simplest solution to monster placement is to simply generate encounter tables, or to decide what creatures dwell in or nearby the adventure locale. There are many ways this can be done, based on terrain, season, time of day, and so forth, but it may be easier to simply use "level" in the sense that it corresponds, as above, to the HD of the creature. Therefore, what follows is simply a construction of the monsters available for the "tiers." When moving "down" a tier, for number encountered, roll one additional die of the appropriate type as presented in Monsters and Treasure; if the creature has more than one range, use the larger value. Moving "up" a tier halves the encountered number to a minimum of one (1); if the creature has more than one available range, use the lower of the options. A direction to roll on more than one tier treats subsequent rolls normally without reduction or increase to the number encountered, and this is the exception to the aforementioned rule.

Percentages assigned do not necessarily reflect any game logic and it is encouraged that a Castle Keeper modifies these charts to suit their particular campaign and world.

TABLE 12.1: TIER 1-3 HD 1-3

Tier I (HD 1-3)		Tier II (HD 4-6)		Tier III (HD 7-9)	
1D100	Monster	1D100	Monster	1D100	Monster
01	Ant, Giant (Worker or Soldier)	01	Achaierai	01	Aboleth
02	Ape, Great	02-04	Allip	02	Banshee
03	Arrowhawk, Small	05	Ant, Giant (Queen)	03-04	Barghest (7-9 HD)
04	Baboon	06-07	Ankheg	05-06	Bear, Cave
05-06	Barghest (1-3 HD)	08-09	Arrowhawk (Medium)	07	Behir
07-08	Bear, Black	10-11	Assassin Vine	08	Belker
09-10	Bird of Prey, Small	12	Barghest (4-6 HD)	09	Bodak
11	Blink Dog	13-15	Basilisk	10-11	Bulette
12-13	Boar, Wild (Razorback)	16-17	Bear, Brown (Grizzly)	12-14	Chimera
14-16	Bugbear	18	Bird of Prey, Large	15	Couatl
17	Cat	19-20	Centaur	16-17	Dragon, Black (Age 3)
18-19	Crocodile (Alligator)	21	Cloaker	18-19	Dragon, Blue (Age 2)
20	Darkmantle	22-23	Cockatrice	20-21	Dragon, Green (Age 2)
21-22	Dog (Coyote)	24-25	Doppelganger	22-23	Dragon, Red (Age 1)
23	Dragon, White (Age 1)	26	Dragon, Black (Age 1 or 2)	24-25	Dragon, White (Age 3)
24	Dryad	27	Dragon, Blue (Age 1)	26-27	Dragon, Brass (Age 2)
25-26	Dwarf	28	Dragon, Green (Age 1)	28-29	Dragon, Bronze (Age 2)
27	Elemental, Any, Small	29	Dragon, White (Age 2)	30-31	Dragon, Copper (Age 2 or 3)
28-29	Elf, Any	30	Dragon, Brass (Age 1)	32-33	Dragon, Gold (Age 1)
30	Fleshcrawler	31	Dragon, Bronze (Age 1)	34-35	Dragon, Silver (Age 1)
31	Frog, Giant	32	Dragon, Copper (Age 1)	36	Dragonne
32	Fungus, Violet	33	Eagle, Giant	37	Drider
33-35	Gnoll	34-35	Ettercap	38-40	Elemental, Any, Medium
36-37	Gnome	36-37	Gargoyle	41	Elephant
38-40	Goblin	38-40	Gelatinous Cube	42	Genie, Djinni
41-42	Halfling	41-43	Ghast	43-45	Giant, Hill
43	Harpy	44	Gibbering Mouther	46	Golem, Clay
44	Herd Animal	45-47	Green Slime	47	Golem, Flesh
45	Hippogriff	48	Hellhound (4 HD)	48	Gorgon
46-47	Hobgoblin	49-50	Horse, Heavy War	49-50	Griffon
48	Homunculus	51-52	Hydra (5-6 HD)	51	Hag, Any
49	Horse, Light War or Riding	53	Lion	52	Hellhound (8 HD)
50-54	Human	54	Lizard, Giant	53-54	Hydra (7-9 HD)
55	Imp	55-56	Lycanthrope, Wereboar	55	Invisible Stalker
56	Jackal	57-58	Lycanthrope, Weretiger	56	Lamia
57	Jaculus	59-60	Lycanthrope, Werewolf	57	Lammasu
58-59	Kobold	61	Manticore	58	Lycanthrope, Werebear
60	Lizardfolk	62	Medusa	59	Mimic
61	Locathah	63	Naga, Ghost	60-62	Minotaur
62	Lycanthrope, Wererat	64-65	Ogre	63-64	Mummy
63	Lynx, Giant	66	Ogre Mage	65	Naga, Dark
64	Merman/Mermaid	67	Ooze, Ochre Jelly	66	Naga, Spirit
65	Nymph	68	Otyugh	67	Naga, Water

66	Ooze, Gray	69	Owlbear	68	Nightmare
67-69	Orc	70	Pegasus	69	Rakshasa
70	Pony, Any	71	Phase Spider	70	Remorhaz
71	Pseudodragon	72	Rust Monster	71-72	Roper
72	Quasit	73	Salamander	73	Shambling Mound
73-74	Rat, Giant	74	Shadow Mastiff	74	Shark
75	Raven	75-76	Snake, Giant Constrictor	75	Spectre
76	Sahuagin	77-78	Spider, Large	76	Sphinx, Gynosphinx
77	Satyr	79	Tiger	77	Sphinx, Hieracosphinx
78	Screecher	80	Toad, Giant	78	Treant
79	Shadow	81-82	Troll, River	79-81	Troll, Hill
80-81	Skeleton	83	Unicorn	82-83	Vampire
82-83	Snake, Venomous	84-85	Wight	84	Will-o'-Wisp
84-85	Spider, Small or Medium	86	Wolf, Worg or Winter	85-86	Wyvern
86	Sprite, Any	87-88	Wraith	87	Xorn
87	Stirge	89-90	Non-Player Character(s)	88-90	Non-Player Character(s)
88	Tavis Wyrm	91-92	Roll on Tier I	91-92	Roll on Tier II
89	Tick, Giant	93-94	Roll on Tier III	93-94	Roll on Tier IV
90	Troglodyte	95-96	Roll twice on Tier II	95-96	Roll twice on Tier III
91	Wolf	97-98	Pick any Tier II result	97-98	Pick any Tier III result
92	Yellow Mold	99	Add Tier I result	99	Add Tier II result
93	Yeth Hound	00	Add Tier III result	00	Add Tier IV result
94-95	Zombie				
96	Non-Player Character(s)				
97	Roll on Tier II				
98	Roll twice on Tier I				
99	Pick Any Tier I result				
00	Add Tier II result				

TABLE 12.2: TIER 4-6

Tier IV (HD 10-12)		Tier V (HD 13-15)		Tier VI (HD 16-18)	
1d100	Monster	1d100	Monster	1d100	Monster
01-03	Arrowhawk, Large	01-05	Dragon, Blue (Age 4-6)	01	Dinosaur, Triceratops
04-05	Devourer	06-10	Dragon, Red (Age 3)	02	Dinosaur, Tyrannosaurus
06-09	Dragon, Black (Age 4-6)	11-15	Dragon, White (Age 7-9)	03-06	Dragon, Black (Age 7-9)
10-12	Dragon, Blue (Age 3)	16-20	Dragon, Brass (Age 7-9)	07-10	Dragon, Blue (Age 7-9)
13-15	Dragon, Green (Age 3-6)	21-25	Dragon, Copper (Age 7-9)	11-14	Dragon, Green (Age 7-10)
16-18	Dragon, Red (Age 2)	26-30	Dragon, Gold (Age 3)	15-18	Dragon, Red (Age 4-6)
19-22	Dragon, White (Age 4-6)	31-33	Frost Worm	19-22	Dragon, Brass (Age 10)
23-26	Dragon, Brass (Age 3-6)	34-40	Giant, Cloud	23-25	Dragon, Bronze (Age 4-6)
27-30	Dragon, Bronze (Age 3)	41-50	Golem, Iron	26-29	Dragon, Gold (Age 4-6)
31-33	Dragon, Copper (Age 4-6)	51-55	Prysmal Eye (Nonocculus)	30-35	Dragon, Silver (Age 4-6)
34-37	Dragon, Gold (Age 2)	56-60	Purple Worm	36-40	Elemental, Any, Large
38-40	Dragon, Silver (Age 2 or 3)	61-75	Non-Player Character(s)	41-45	Giant, Storm
41-45	Ettin	76-80	Roll on Tier IV	46-48	Kraken (Leviathan)
46-47	Genie, Efreeti	81-85	Roll on Tier VI	49-55	Lich

48-50	Ghost	86-90	Roll twice on Tier V	56-58	Roc
51-55	Giant, Fire	91-94	Pick any Tier V result	59-60	Titan
56-60	Giant, Frost	95-97	Add Tier IV result	61-75	Non-Player Character(s)
61-65	Giant, Stone	98-00	Add Tier VI result	76-80	Roll on Tier V
66-70	Golem, Stone			81-85	Roll on Tier VII
71-75	Hydra (10-12 HD)			86-90	Roll twice on Tier VI
76-77	Naga, Guardian			91-93	Pick any Tier VI result
78-80	Ooze, Black Pudding			94-96	Add Tier V result
81-83	Sphinx, Androsphinx			97-00	Add Tier VII result
84-86	Sphinx, Criosphinx				
87-88	Yrthak				
89-92	Non-Player Character(s)				
93-94	Roll on Tier III				
95-96	Roll on Tier V				
97	Roll twice on Tier IV				
98	Pick any Tier IV result				
99	Add Tier III result				
00	Add Tier V result				

TABLE 12.3: TIER VII(HD 19-30+)

1D100	Monster
01-05	Dragon, Black (Age 10-12)
06-10	Dragon, Blue (Age 10-12)
11-15	Dragon, Green (Age 11 or 12)
16-20	Dragon, Red (Age 7-12)
21-25	Dragon, White (Age 10-12)
26-30	Dragon, Brass (Age 11 or 12)
31-35	Dragon, Bronze (Age 7-12)
36-40	Dragon, Copper (Age 10-12)
41-45	Dragon, Copper (Age 7-12)
46-50	Dragon, Silver (Age 7-12)
51-70	Non-Player Character(s)
71-80	Roll on Tier VI
81-87	Roll twice on Tier VII
88-94	Pick Any Tier VII result
95-00	Add Tier VI result

Note: If the random encounter indicates an elemental, there is a chance that the elemental has more hit dice and is therefore of a higher tier than normal. Consult **Table 12.4: Elemental Tiers**. Based upon the elemental's size, roll the indicated dice to determine not only the hit dice of the elemental, but what tier the elemental should be placed in.

TABLE 12.4: ELEMENTAL TIERS

Small (1d6)	
Hit Dice	**Tier**
1-3	I
4-6	II
Medium (1d10+6, reroll on result of 16)	
Hit Dice	**Tier**
7-9	III
10-12	IV
13-15	V
Large (1d10+15, reroll on result of 25)	
Hit Dice	**Tier**
16-18	VI
19-24	VII

CHAPTER 13 – EXPANDING THE GENRE

Castles & Crusades is a fantasy role playing game and as such there are no limits to the playing arena. The idea that the magic of a powerful wizard can teleport people over great distances, shift people between planes, and even stop time is in itself a mind boggling concept. To envision sorcery that can take characters across inter-dimensional landscapes is no mental leap, considering that departure point. In fact, it is a natural occurrence in a world dominated by divine and arcane sorcery. Inter-dimensional travel may land the characters in worlds dominated by different forms of magic and even technology giving reason to introduce modern forms of warfare. Beyond this, the Castle Keeper may desire to expand their game's scope by adding primitive firearms to the mix. It is not unreasonable to assume that, in a world where dwarves build and construct all manner of edifices, that they would have mastered the use of gunpowder. Being a warlike people, the mental leap to firearms is a short one. But whatever the case, the information supplied below allows for the CK to expand the fantasy genre with a baseline bit of information on firearms and other types of weapons and beyond into different genres of play, from westerns to pulp.

MERGING FANTASY WITH TECHNOLOGY

Merging these two genres is not that difficult. In many respects they are much the same. Sorcery that projects manifest power as channeled by a wizard, enabling him to hurl a *fireball* scores of feet from his body is not that much different than a flame-thrower. There are many such parallels. For example, a video conference that allows a hologram of someone in a room, or better still, transports them into a room is something akin to the teleportation of people that is common in most fantasy RPGs. Allowing gun powder and steam engines to enter a world of fantasy is little more than allowing the inhabitants some technological innovations.

With these similarities in mind, it is important to note that as soon as technology enters the game, it changes the nature of the game. Many fantasy role players do not react kindly to guns and the like and before any such changes are made, the CK must consult with the players to make certain they are interested in adding these weapons to the mix. These additions tend to change the genre of role playing and open a virtual Pandora's Box of additions and changes. Integrating them into the game can be fun and challenging but must be done with the Siege Engine involved.

CAMPAIGN STYLES

As has been previously mentioned, using modern elements can be a fun and exciting use of the SIEGE Engine to drive adventures in nearly any genre. Ultimately, the choice of how gritty and realistic or fantastic and whimsical your campaign develops depends entirely on the needs of the Castle Keeper and the players at the gaming table. Listed below are a variety of types of campaign styles that blend with "modern" considerations for a **Castles & Crusades** based campaign.

Post-Renaissance (c.1600-1700CE)

Also known as the age of exploration in our own world, this campaign style still uses armaments and armor of traditional fantasy. Full plate begins declining in utility during this time, until by the end of the period only high ranking warriors and royalty would be found wearing it. As full plate declines, half plate and the coat of mail briefly rise to prominence. The general trend though is towards discarding armor, as gunpowder weapons become more powerful during the period. Matchlocks, cannon, and stone-hurling mortars are either in development or used by professional armies of the world, while rapiers, short swords, and daggers are still common. Heavy cavalry is slowly being supplanted by light cavalry or Dragoons (dismounted cavalry/medium infantry). Mortar and cannon have replaced the trebuchet as the primary means of besieging walled cities and forts.

This setting style could be used with traditional magic, and traditional fantasy characters and races with little modification. Realistic approaches would transform all races to human of course, and level the base Hit Dice to a d8 or d10 for all classes. Certain classes may become outdated with the updates in technology in a magic free environment.

Pre-Industrial Age (c. 1700CE - c. 1750BCE)

In this age, smoothbore flintlocks are in wide use. Most items are still manufactured by hand though the quality has greatly improved, and are mass-produced in an assembly line manner, though without actual heavy machinery. Swords, cutlasses, sabers, rapiers, daggers, and hand axes are still widely used when ammunition supplies run low. Cannon have become more reliable and are used aboard ships as well as in fortresses. Field cannon are hauled to battlefields. Heavy armor and shields prove too weak to stop most gunfire and cannon shot and warriors abandon their use. Light cavalry used to skirmish or harass enemy flanks have almost completely replaced heavy cavalry. Sea travel, although still extremely dangerous, is helped greatly by modern developments in sextant, compass, and high quality map use. Primitive races are at a huge disadvantage to the range and deadliness of modern armaments.

This setting remains well played with traditional fantasy races and elements. Realistic approaches still maintain an increase in HD. Magic use remains much as it does in other versions; spell casters and healers work as normal and magic extends to gunpowder weapons.

Industrial Age (c. 1750CE - c. 1940CE)

The Industrial age leads to mass developments in such things as steam, coal, and eventually internal combustion gasoline powered vehicles and equipment. Armor is now reserved for vehicles to protect them from rockets and bombs. Cannon, shoulder, and hand weaponry is all rifled, increasing range and accuracy of projectile weapons. Sword, bow, and other melee

weapons have almost completely been supplanted by hand weapons. Motor vehicles replace horses and other mounts.

Technology supplants magic use to some degree, but magic users and clerics continue in their normal track, only their services are slightly less in demand.

Post Industrial Age (c. 1940 - c. 2099CE)

Technology has grown by leaps and bounds. Cartridge rifles, and high tech equipment become widely available. Missile weapons, rocket propelled grenades. Large weaponry is replaced with smaller, faster, accurate, and high ranged projectiles. Hand to hand combat is nearly extinct except in close quarters house to house fighting.

Ages such as the industrial and post industrial age leave a lot to be mined so far as fantasy adventure. Understanding that fantasy weaponry as it is commonly known and experienced would be a "thing of the past", elements of magic and various races could easily be adapted to suit a high tech fantasy campaign. Imagine a dwarven nation equipped with tunneling tanks and high powered rockets, or hordes of orcs driving dune buggies and land rover equipment mounted with light or heavy machine guns plaguing a great urban metropolis. Gangs of Halflings in large cities hacking computer systems or peddling illicit materials and you have a good start for a fantasy campaign of the "modern" era. Wizards with the power of charm or extra sensory perception could run major industries and manipulate economies and governments with ease.

Advances in science and medicine increase life expectancy and fertility of all races offering a higher base HD than listed by their standard character class. New battlefield procedures from spray foam to anti coagulants help hasten the healing time of wounds.

Post Apocalyptic

Such games feature cybernetic engineered characters. New races could include cyborgs, androids, mutants, or robots. Magic could serve as a substitute for newly evolved psychic powers. Modern weaponry and fantasy weaponry blend, as does the presence of "super science." Such campaigns could be run with gritty realism or in a more tongue and cheek manner where some things work well, and other things work intermittently, à la a "wand of wonders".

Adventure themes could involve survival, defense against bandits, exploration of radioactive or destroyed areas looking for technology, weapons, food, or "things that work." Standard monsters from **Monsters & Treasure** could be given variants (see **Chapter 12** above) with extra eyes, limbs, attacks, abilities, or appetites.

Science Fiction: The Age of Lasers

Science fiction has been blended with fantasy fiction since the days of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells. Their pulp fiction descendants in Edgar Rice Burroughs and Robert E. Howard honed this blend of science fiction/fantasy to a high art, easily blending the genres in their story telling. Thus the fantastic settings and adventures released at the advent of the fantasy role playing game genre were no different.

Found here are basic rules which the Castle Keeper may use to blend science fiction elements into their **Castles & Crusades** game, and with further development, the ability to play an entirely science fiction adventure complete with plasma swords, laser rifles, and jet packs, and state of the art battle armor with a "Y" rack bristling with weapon systems.

Like fantasy, science fiction embraces a broad genre from "near future" science fiction using current cutting edge technology ramped up to what "experts" believe their potential uses will be, to the "space opera" where high speed deep space travel and alien races are an accepted everyday reality.

Space Age

Space age themes are as wide open as space adventure films and novels. Aliens could replace, supplant, or add to existing races. A possible alternative setting could involve elegant elven star fighters or dwarven battle galleys bristling with cannons. Orc pirates could ply the space-ways hidden on captured galactic barges. Characters could be on a hunt for alien technology or artifacts that lead them back to their long lost homeworld. Demons and undead could be as common in a space opera setting as they are in traditional fantasy adventure. Perhaps dragons are immune to the void of space or have their own star bases loaded with a thousand years worth of ill gotten loot. Imperial Theocracies based on spreading the faith of clerics' deities could command great crusader armadas that threaten the freedoms of entire star systems with jihad or worse!

Standard races and classes work well in such campaigns, though some abilities may have to be altered to fit the genre. Magic is used by some but so many have a basic command of even complex technology that magic loses some of its luster, becoming a tool better used behind the scenes.

Pulp Noir

This genre encompasses such elements as detective fiction, crime drama, and gritty urban realism. Here Mafioso and thugs vie for power and control of a dark corrupt underworld. Handguns, shotguns, and submachine guns are the norm as are heavy four wheeled vehicles. Campaigns in this genre can expect stealth, double dealing, and murder mystery elements to be standard. There is a strong chance of law enforcement involvement so that the norm of "killing enemies and stealing their loot" is balanced against the very real possibility of long term imprisonment. This type of genre could well be played out along with dark horror or fantasy elements involving standard fantasy races and classes. However, heavy armors and melee weapons are eschewed for normal dress or magically/technological protective devices. An easy way to think of this is if you were to walk down the street of a modern city wearing an ancient suit of plate armor or chain mail, you would probably

incur some strange looks. If, however, you happened to have a bullet proof Kevlar vest hidden underneath your jacket its slim bulk would probably draw little attention from those untrained in looking for their telltale signs.

Such adventures rely more heavily on role play vs. the "roll' play of other modes of gaming but often offer rich plot driven story telling in the vein of classic detective movies or novels by Dashiell Hammet, Raymond Chandler, or James Ellroy. To enjoy playing such a game requires plenty of plot twists and mysteries that are peeled like an onion, one disturbing layer at a time.

Horror Fiction

Already a tradition of fantasy from the days of early fairy tales and ancient myth, horror fiction offers other alternatives to the modern minded Castle Keeper. A blend of horror and science fiction offers other avenues that were explored by the likes of H. G. Wells, subsequently perfected by H. P. Lovecraft and Clark Ashton Smith in the pulp heyday of the 1930's. Other-worldly entities of horrible aspect and supernatural power inhabit the minds of common folk. Ancient relics left by long lost extra-terrestrial civilizations spawn terrors from the depths of history and beyond space and time.

Zombie infestation games can be quite fun, where ordinary people are placed into a city or town infested with zombies, and armed with makeshift weapons, or shotguns and firearms lifted from "ye olde abandoned gun shop". Simply use the zombie stats from **Monsters & Treasure**, or expand their repertoire by advancing or re-imagining your spawn of the undead any way you like. Have some maps ready and floor plans and give the characters a goal. Certainly goal number one is survival. The second goal perhaps could be "reaching the safe zone" or "finding the zombie cure" or simply surviving in a world fallen to any number of horrors.

Traditional "slasher" type horror games could easily enough be run where the player characters take on the role of paranormal investigators or even "average Joes" that find themselves in unnatural or horrific situations. Such games rely on attribute checks for listening or noticing would be killers, or on athletic style checks to flee from harm. These adventures refer to a "Pursue and Evade" style of adventure that is easily accommodated by attribute checks and role play. Although different from standard role play fare, they can be quite enjoyable by simply making everyone an "ordinary human" with a d8 HD, 8-11 hit points. Actions are resolved by attempts to use such items as knives, firearms, or other materials. Armor Class is a base of 10, plus dexterity modifiers.

Settings for such games could and should be drawn from your own neighborhood, or town, its landmarks and other buildings. Old houses, buildings, abandoned streets or even dirty alley ways serve as points of inspiration. Again, games of this nature are limited only by your creativity and desire to explore new ways of using the SIEGE Engine to create adventure at your gaming table.

Race and Class

Race and class variants are wide open in more futuristic based campaigns. A clever CK may use any of the information found in the Castle Keeper's Guide or other sources to develop classes and races specific to their campaign needs. Luckily, the existing archtypes work well virtually "as is" with only slight modifications to make them fit a modern game style.

The myriad of play styles open to gamers using the SIEGE Engine is endless and truly only dependent on the type of game that the Castle Keeper and players are looking for. For example, a modern combat or military espionage style game may use existing classes like fighter, ranger, rogue, or assassin to fill out the roles of soldier, scout, spy, and assassin. Other character classes could be devised based on the standard arch-types such as medic replacing cleric, technician replacing wizard and commander replacing knights/paladins.

Of course, in any science fiction or modern style campaign, nothing is stopping the Castle Keeper from using the standard races and classes as written to create science fiction or fantasy based elves, dwarves, and half orcs. A world could be devised where divine and arcane magic move hand and hand with guns and cannon, or lasers, powered battle armor and great swords with chainsaw blades!

That said, certain other classes do not translate as easily, such as the druid, illusionist, wizard, or paladin. The follow examples depict possible class interpretations.

Fighter

The Professional Soldier: Fighters may easily substitute for any marine, soldier, or law enforcement type class required for a modern game. Their weapon specialization abilities and use of any sort of weaponry or armor give them an advantage over civilians or those less trained or equipped to deal with the weapons of war.

Ability Substitutions: Fighters in a modern setting may require a broader interpretation of weapon specialization. As opposed to specific models, they may specialize in general catagories, such as hand guns, heavy machine guns, lasers, or even vehicle mounted weapons.

Ranger

Special Forces: Rangers easily transfer to special operations forces. Their blend of stealth and massive killing power makes them one of the deadliest of modern style character classes.

Ability Substitutions: Rangers in science fiction games may have a specific alien race, or alien race type where their combat marauder or favored enemy bonuses apply. In modern combat style games, the Castle Keeper may rule that their abilities apply to all enemies, cap out at a certain number, or apply only in specific circumstances, such as when the ranger has the advantage of surprise over foes.

Rogue

The Infiltrator: Rogues could fill in the roll of the spy, or infiltrator. Their abilities of stealth and secrecy are second to none, as is their ability to overcome mines, and modern surveillance.

Ability Substitutions: None

Additional Considerations

The Castle Keeper should consider increasing the base hit points of characters to a d10 regardless of character class. Likewise, it could prove helpful to grant characters their Constitution score at first level for starting hit points to give them a fighting chance. Justifications for this are many, and could simply be resolved "realistically" by better medicine or enhanced health through science if a campaign reason for doing so is necessary at all.

Combat and Equipment Considerations

In the modern and science fiction genre, technology replaces or supplants magic on numerous levels. Already, there are night vision goggles that replicate "dark vision" or "low light vision". Telescopic scopes replicate the effects of magical bows that fire arrows at greater ranges. Specially woven fibers made into so-called "bullet proof" jackets reduce the effects and depth of common ammunition against soft targets. Armor piercing rounds replicate arrows and bolts that do extra damage.

The same is true for various science fiction "givens" like jet packs and jump boots which replicate magical items that allow flight or leaping over unnatural distances. In other words, with a bit of creativity, a Castle Keeper can easily substitute "tech" devices for magical items and vice versa. A party of fantasy fiction adventurers who come across a crashed space craft would not know the difference between their traditional magic native to their plane, and such items that replicate those same powers but are indeed tech devices. Battery life may replace "charges" on these curiously shaped staves and wands. Once batteries or ammunition is extinguished, users find that their "type of magic" is otherworldly and thus un-rechargeable with their technological level.

The zap or report may be considered a side effect of the "magical" power that they release. No doubt an electronic glow or hum would indicate some form of "arcane energy" found in an item, though they would not necessarily be detected as "magical" unless they had also been enchanted with a magical enhancement bonus.

Enchanting Technology

Since modern manufacturing processes would make most all modern firearms and science fiction weapons items of superior quality, nothing would necessarily stop a spell caster of appropriate level, wealth, and power from enchanting such items. Depending on the particular campaign, it could be feasible to enchant a muzzle loading pistol or other firearm or ray gun to +1 or greater enhancement. Such enhancements may prove necessary in campaigns where monsters or foes such as ghosts or demonic entities require a magical enhancement bonus of some specific plus before they may be damaged.

COMBAT

Combat in Modern and Science Fiction adventures works as normal, with the exception that the weapons deal significantly more devastating damage at greater range. For this reason, outdoor encounters begin at greater range than similar wilderness style encounters in a traditional fantasy based role playing game.

Characters move or attack, or move half their distance and attack. Characters attempt actions, make attribute checks and roll for saves vs. various effects of advanced weaponry. Due to advanced aim and lethality, movement, cover, and stealth rules all become more important than ever in the livelihood of characters involved.

Weapons

There are multiple types of weapons, from the primitive black powder to the sonic wave emitter. Depending upon the game's genre, these weapons can be nice additions to the normal fantasy equipment or replace them entirely.

Primitive Firearms

Primitive firearms are the firearms first developed at the onset of the age of gunpowder. Most had a bronze or iron barrel, a small hole to ignite gunpowder, and a muzzle where the ammunition was both loaded into and fired from.

TABLE 13.1 PRIMITIVE FIREARMS

Weapon	Dmg	RoF*	Loaded Capacity**	Reloading†	Range Inc ††	Wgt	Cost‡	EV
Black Powder Grenade	1d10	SS	1	1 rounds	100	1 lbs.	50	1
Matchlock	1d6	SS	1	3 rounds	300	8 lbs.	125	2
Flint Lock or Smooth Bore	1d8	SS	1	2 rounds	500	8 lbs	250	2
Flint Lock Pistol	1d6	SS	1	2 rounds	25	2 lbs	100	1
Rifled Flintlock/Cap & Ball Rifle	1d8	SS	1	2 rounds	700	8 lbs.	300	2
Cap and Ball revolver	1d6	SS	6	3 rounds	75	3 lbs	125	1
Cartridge Breech Loader	d12	SS	1	1 round	180	8 lbs	300	2
Cartridge Revolver	1d8	SS	6	2 rounds	100	3 lbs	150	1
Cartridge Tubular Magazine Rifle	1d8	SS	1	3 rounds	150	6 lbs	500	2
Smoothbore Canon (crew of 5)	6d6	SS	1	3 rounds	900	600 lbs	1200	5
Smoothbore Mortar	8d8	SS		3 rounds	1800	400 lbs	2000	4

* RoF is Rate of Fire. This represents the number of times the weapon can be fired in a single combat round: SS: Single Shot; DT: Double Tap; FA: Full Auto.

**Loaded capacity is how many rounds it can carry when fully loaded

†Reloading is how many rounds it takes to reload.

††Range Inc is Range increment and refers to how many feet a weapon can shoot in the short range. The long range being triple the listed number (which incurs normal penalties.)

‡Value is gold, dollars, euros, credits, or whatever valuation your campaign uses.

Black Powder Grenade: A black powder grenade is a cast iron canister or sphere with a fuse that is lit before the grenade is hurled at enemies or dropped on them from walled fortifications. These grenades rely on the fragility of the iron to create fragments that hurl through the air at high velocity killing and maiming random targets in the blast radius.

Matchlock: A matchlock was one of the first widely used firearms. A heavy wooden muzzle loader with a wide smooth bore barrel. Powder was poured down the barrel and the weapon was then packed with lead balls, nails, or even small stones. The firing mechanism involved a long slow burning fuse attached to a hammer lock. A primer pan was located next to the breech of the barrel so that when the hammer dropped, the fuse ignited black powder in the primer pan, igniting the gunpowder in the breech, and hopefully discharging the ammunition towards the enemy. Matchlock firearms were used by the Spanish Conquistadores in their sack of Native American cultures of Mexico, Central, and South America. Due to the lengthy time of reloading and the unreliability of the weapon, most combat at the advent of the matchlock still involved heavy cavalry, steel armor, sword, and lance.

Smooth Bore Flintlock (musket): The smoothbore flintlock was the first reliable and widely used firearm. The flintlock has a firing mechanism which involves a cocking hammer with a vice holding a small piece of flint, a steel frizzen (or striker), and a small pan filled with higher grade "primer powder". The pan had a small hole drilled into it that led to the breech. Smoothbore flintlocks, like the matchlock were muzzle loaders, meaning black powder, followed by silk or cotton cloth and then a lead round ball were stuffed down the barrel of the weapon with a wooden ram-rod slightly longer than the length of the barrel. Many of these weapons were over five feet long, though short stock and short barrel weapons were invented for use by sailors and favored by pirates. The weapon earned its name of "smoothbore" as manufacturers did not rifle the barrels.

Flintlocks needed heavy maintenance and frequent cleaning. They were susceptible to misfire, as well as virtually unusable in wet, rainy, or overly humid conditions. That said, the flintlock brought about the end of the age of armor, as their increased barrel length and relative reliability could easily pierce heavy plate armor at equal to or greater range than the longbow. Their use required less training than a longbow-man or crossbowman in terms of months rather than years of training. This allowed armies to field thousands of musketeers for use in massive direct fire confrontations that, in battle, threw up a literal curtain of lead. The most famous of these weapons is the Brown Bess, a .75 caliber land musket used to establish the authority of the British Royal Empire, making them the most feared army in the world at the time.

Note: Rifling involves a spiraling groove cut inside the barrel of a firearm. This groove causes the ammunition to spin on its trajectory, increasing its accuracy and end damage upon reaching the target.

Flintlock Pistol: The flintlock pistol is simply a very short variation of the smoothbore flintlock musket. Users of such weapons often wore bandoliers of 2-6 of these loaded firearms as the loading time was little a little more difficult than their longer brethren. A bandolier of flintlock pistols is called a brace. They came in calibers ranging from .32 to .45 and were often

fired, and tossed in favor of cutlass, rapier, or saber; or turned so the handle could be used as a club. Many were ornately carved and decorated, with the finest specimens being used in matched pairs for dueling purposes.

Flintlock Rifle: Like the musket before it, the flintlock rifle is a muzzle loader that uses exactly the same firing mechanism and technology as the smoothbore musket. The difference came in the advent of rifling technology that put a spin on the ball and an increase in muzzle velocity and overall accuracy and range of the firearm. Aside from the increased range and killing power, the flintlock rifle suffered from the same constraints as the musket, that being problems of moisture, humidity, and a relatively long reloading time.

Cap and Ball Rifle: This proved an evolution (in the minds of some) of the widely used flintlock rifle. No longer did the firer need to keep an extra horn of primer powder to ignite the gunpowder in the breech of their weapon. The percussion cap and steel nipple replaced unreliable flint. With the percussion cap, so long as the powder in the breech is dry, the weapon would fire even in wet conditions, a problem that had plagued flintlock weapons of the past. The downside to the cap and ball method was that when a user ran out of percussion caps, and was far from the general store, they now carried a useless weapon akin to a wooden and steel club. For this reason many frontier users carry a flint and steel firing mechanism as a backup to the hammer and nipple firing mechanism utilized by the cap and ball gun.

These weapons came in a variety of calibers, ranging from .45 to .78. A famous example of this firearm is the .50 caliber Hawken Rifle that came in both flint lock and cap and ball versions used extensively by mountain men and fur traders of the early 1800's.

A second evolution of these weapons came in paper cartridges, where the silk or cotton cloth previously used to seat the ball was replaced. A paper cartridge contained the appropriately measured amount of powder and a lead round or mini ball. To load, the paper was torn off at one end, the powder dumped down the barrel, then the paper and ball wadded and shoved down the barrel of the weapon by means of the ramrod. Paper cartridges and percussion caps reduced loading time by half over flintlock predecessors.

Smoothbore Cannon: Made of brass and ranging in length from four to fifteen ft. long, smoothbore are muzzle loading cannons measured by the weight of solid ball, exploding shell, spherical case, or cylindrical canister. Cannons fire at a flat trajectory with a typical elevation of 5° above horizon. Typically the projectile weight ranged from 6 to 40 lbs (fired from huge cannon emplacements) with the average cannon shot weighing anywhere from 6 to 12 lb. The range of the smoothbore cannon is dependant on the type of ammunition loaded into it.

Solid Shot: Solid shot consists of solid iron balls or shaped stone. It comes in a variety of sizes, from the very small to the very large. It is used to batter down ramparts, destroy gates, hole the hulls of vessels, and to bounce through tight formations of soldiers, spreading panic and death.

Exploding shell: A hollow iron ball filled with black powder affixed with a fuse. Fuse length determines when the hollow shell detonates, raining shrapnel through ranks of soldiers and spreading terror when fired above their heads.

Spherical Case: As the exploding shell, with the exception it is also filled with lead round-ball ammunition, increasing the radius of death that the subsequent explosion spreads.

Canister: Canister shot is a can filled with sawdust, and lead or iron round ball. Also known as grapeshot, this ammunition turns the cannon into the equivalent of a short range battlefield shotgun, capable of mowing down charging ranks of foes.

Smoothbore Mortar: Largely immobile, these squat, barrel-like weapons are made from iron or brass and often weigh thousands of pounds. They are measured in inches vs. lbs. Mortars of this sort are used to arc ammunition into fortified positions, and were used as coastal defense batteries against invading warships.

Cap and Ball Revolver: Cap and ball revolvers were the first evolution of the black powder weapon involving a cylinder that was filled with lead ball and black powder and fired with a copper percussion cap. The hammer of the weapon needed to be cocked every time the weapon was fired. Cap and Ball Revolvers were overall safer than their other black powder predecessors were, though had the danger of misfiring, and discharging every round in all remaining cylinders with sometimes disastrous results. Reloading a cap and ball revolver is a lengthy process so, as often as not, users of this weapon would keep spare cylinders to hot swap when their initial six rounds had been expended. On a roll of natural 1 there is a 25% chance that all rounds are expended requiring the firer to make a dexterity save (Challenge Level 5) or suffer 2d6 points of damage. If the user fails their dexterity save with a natural 1, they also suffer 1d4 points of temporary constitution damage and 1d6 points of permanent dexterity damage (missing fingers, etc.).

Cartridge Firearms: Cartridge firearms are a technological innovation where the primer and propellant for the projectile are contained in a copper jacket with the bullet seated firmly into the end of the cartridge. They are water proof, but more highly accurate than their primitive predecessors are. They typically do not fire underwater, however, unless special modifications are made to the weapon to allow them to do so.

Bullet cartridges were first held in revolver cylinders, loaded individually into single action breech (break apart to load) weapons, or in tubular magazines capable of holding between 4-7 cartridges.

Single Action Cartridge Revolver: The cartridge revolver is the evolution of the cap and ball revolver first developed for use by cavalry and ship board marines. The typical revolver fires large caliber ammunition and has a cylinder that holds 6

rounds. The first of these weapons were single action, requiring the hammer to be cocked every time the weapon was fired.

Cartridge Single Action Rifle (Breech Loader): hese breeh loading (break apart to load) weapons have extremely long range, but smaller caliber ammunition than their muzzle loading forebears. They hold one shot, and must be opened at the end between the stock and barrel to reload. Reloading time is greatly reduced over its muzzle loading predecessors. Its rifled barrel allows for higher velocity and thus greater killing power than large caliber mini ball or round ball ammunition. The *Model 1874 metallic cartridge Sharps Rifle* is an example of this type of firearm.

Cartridge Tubular Magazine Rifle: Like the breech loading rifle, the tubular magazine rifle uses copper cartridge ammunition. It has a cocking lever that must be manually pulled to chamber a new round of ammunition. Its short, rifled barrel allowed for greater accuracy and muzzle velocity. The tubular magazine held an average of fifteen rounds, meaning it could be fired fifteen times consecutively before reloading. Fully reloading a tubular magazine rifle takes considerably longer than a breech loader however, often requiring the firer to take cover for a few moments to reload, then re-enter the fight. The most famous of these weapons is the Winchester Model 1874.

TABLE 13.2 MODERN FIREARMS

Weapon	Dmg	RoF *	Loaded Capacity**	Reloading†	Range Inc ††	Wgt	Cost‡	EV
Semi Automatic Pistol	1d8	SS or DT	8-20	1 round	25	2 lbs.	250	1
Sub Machine Gun	1d8	SS, DT, FA	30-60	1 round	150	6 lbs	650	1
Rifle	1d10	SS, DT, FA	30-60	1 round	450	9 lbs.	500	2
Carbine	1d8	SS, DT, FA	30-60	1 round	350	7 lbs.	400	2
Light Machine Gun	3d6	Full Auto (cone)	200 Round Belt	3 rounds	200	18 lbs.	1200	2
Heavy Machine Gun	5d6	Full Auto (cone)	200 Round Belt	3 rounds	2000	25 lbs.	2000	3
Grenade Launcher	4d6/2d6	Single Shot	1	1 round	250	3 lbs.	200	3
Grenade	3d6/1d6	See below	1	1 Grenade	50	1 lb.	100	1
Rocket Propelled Grenade	5d6/4d6	Single Shot	1	1 round	750	2 lb.	100	2
Mini Gun	8d6	Full Auto (cone)	2000 round Belt	3 rounds	1800	50lbs	5000	5

*RoF is Rate of Fire: This represents the number of times the weapon can be fired in a single combat round. SS: Single Shot; DT: Double Tap; FA: Full Auto B: Beam.

** Loaded Capacity is how many rounds it can carry when fully loaded.

† How many rounds it takes to reload.

†† In feet. It goes up the listed number between short, medium and long. A semi-automatic can shoot 25 feet in short range, but 75 feet in long range.

‡ Value is in gold, dollars, euros, credits or whatever valuation the campaign uses.

Semi Automatic Pistol: The semi automatic handgun is a box fed firearm capable of holding seven to twenty rounds of ammunition. They may be fired in double or single action. Combat pistols are close quarters firearms with a range increment of roughly 25 ft.

Sub Machine Gun: Submachine guns are lightweight firearms capable of firing in semi-automatic mode with the option of firing in either burst fire mode or full automatic mode. At the CK's discretion the weapon may be able to fire in all three modes. Their size is intermediary between the handgun and the carbine rifle. Submachine guns have a high rate of fire and are easily concealable. Sub machine guns have a range increment of 150 ft.

Rifle: A combat infantry rifle is a long rifle capable of firing in semi-automatic mode with the option of firing in either burst fire mode or full automatic mode. At the CK's discretion the weapon may be able to fire in all three modes. Combat infantry rifles have a range increment of 450 ft. and fire copper jacketed rounds with a lead or steel pin type ammunition. Combat infantry rifles are loaded with a box magazine capable of holding anywhere from ten to thirty or more rounds. Combat infantry rifles may be affixed with any number of sighting devices and attachments.

Carbine: The carbine is a short barreled rifle capable of firing in semi-automatic mode with the option of firing in either burst fire mode or full automatic mode. At the CK's discretion the weapon may be able to fire in all three modes. The carbine is considered a close quarters combat weapon with a range increment of 350 ft. Modern carbine rifles are cartridge weapons firing copper jacketed cartridge rounds and a lead or steel pin bullet. The carbine is loaded with a box magazine holding anywhere from ten to thirty or more rounds. The carbine sacrifices range and damage for lightness and portability.

Light Machine Gun: The light machine gun is a belt fed, fully automatic weapon designed for fire support. In other words it is carried into battle by a gunner who uses it to suppress enemy assaults so that allies can gain an advantage over opponents. It is also used to damage or destroy light vehicles and enemies hiding in soft cover. The light machine gun is considered heavy when carried into combat reducing the movement rate of its bearer by 10 feet, and it cannot be carried and fired effectively by small figures unless it is fixed to a mount. Shooters attempting

to "hip" fire the weapon do so at a -2 penalty. The barrel of the weapon must be changed after every 1d4+400 rounds. Typically, the gunner or ammunition bearer carries an additional pair of replacement barrels. They have a range increment of 200 ft.

Heavy Machine Gun: A heavy machine gun is considered an anti-equipment, or anti-vehicle weapon; however, it is used most commonly to interdict approaching enemies or provide covering fire for allies advancing against enemy positions. Heavy machine guns are mounted on tanks, vehicles, or fixed emplacements by means of universal weapon's mount or tripod. Heavy Machine guns are crew operated, requiring a gunner and a loader to keep the gun working efficiently. They fire heavy rounds with a lethal range increment of 2000 ft.

Grenade Launcher: Grenade Launchers come in a variety of types, from hand held holder fired weapons to those mounted under rifle or carbine barrels as added attachments. They may be equipped with a variety of rounds usable for anti-personnel, anti-vehicle, and door breaching activities. These are single fire items that require a full round to reload. They have a range increment of 250 ft. The maximum damage radius is 20 ft. with secondary damage radius of 50 ft.

Grenade: Modern hand grenades are the descendants of the primitive black powder or Greek fire style grenades of the past. These weapons weigh just under a pound and can be thrown an maximum of 150 ft. Unfortunately, their blast radius is only 50 ft., though their maximum damage is only at radius is 20 feet of detonation, with a secondary damaging radius of 40 feet for half damage.

Rocket Propelled Grenade: These 15 lb. mini rockets fire from a milled steel tube affixed with a simple sighting device. They are effective against lightly armored vehicles, helicopters, as well as personnel depending on the type of rocket round loaded. Twisting the nosecone of the rocket sets the fuse of the rocket grenade to detonate at a maximum of 1,000 yards. Their range increment is 750 ft. The RPG has a maximum damage radius of 50 ft. and a secondary damage radius of 100 ft.

Minigun: This vehicle (typically aircraft) mounted multi-barrel (gatling) weapon system fires 7.62x51 mm ammunition at a staggering rate of fire, ranging from 500-4,000 rounds per minute, and a range increment of 1,800 ft. Heavier models mounted in the nosecone of aircraft fire depleted uranium rounds that ignore armor, cutting through titanium and steel alloys like a hot knife through butter.

TABLE 13.3 AGE OF LASERS

Weapon	Dmg	RoF	Loaded Capacity**	Reloading	Range Inc	Wgt	Cost‡	EV
Pulse Laser Pistol	1d8-3d8	SS, DT, B	50 shot battery.	2 round/Self recharging	Line of Sight	2 lbs	500	2
Pulse Laser Rifle	1d10-3d10	SS, DT, B	100 shot battery	3 round/ Self recharging	Line of Sight	10 lbs	750	2
Plasma Blaster	1d8-4d8 Heat	SS, DT, B	100 shot battery	3 round/ Self Recharging	Line of Sight	10 lbs.	750	2
Sonic Wave Disruptor	1d6-4d6	Cone	100 round self charging	3 round/ Self recharging	80 ft.	‡‡	1000	3
Railgun Rifle	1d12	SS, DT, B	100 round magazine	1 round	220 ft.	15 lbs	1200	3
Railgun Cannon	8d12	SS	10 round Magazine	2 rounds	300 ft.	‡‡	10000	3
Laser Cannon	8d10	SS, B	400 round self charging	5 round recharge	Line of Sight	‡‡	8000	4
Plasma-Squad Spt. Gun	6d6 Heat	FA	300 round self recharging	3 round/ recharge	Line of Sight	12 lbs.	5000	4

*RoF is Rate of Fire: This represents the number of times the weapon can be fired in a single combat round. SS: Single Shot; DT: Double Tap; FA: Full Auto; B: Beam.

** Loaded Capacity is how many rounds it can carry when fully loaded.

† How many rounds it takes to reload.

†† In feet. It goes up the listed number between short, medium and long. A sonic wave emitter can shoot 80 feet in short range, but 240 feet in long range.

‡ Value is in gold, dollars, euros, credits or whatever valuation the campaign uses.

‡‡ Weapon must be mounted.

Plasma Blaster: A plasma blaster is a futuristic weapon that fires super heated ionized particles at targets in a distance equivalent to line of sight. They deal damage based on heat transfer from the ionized particle to the target, causing severe burns and possible disintegration of pieces of the target at the point of impact. Plasma blasters use self recharging batteries. Sufficient barrel heat is generated from repeated firing of the weapon, meaning it is only capable of firing forty or so rounds before it must cool for 1d4 rounds.

Plasma blasters come in hand held pistol style and shoulder fired rifles capable of dealing a greater amount of damage to targets due to the larger plasma ion pulse.

Sonic Wave Disruptor: A sonic disruptor is a type of hand held or vehicle mounted device that generates intense targeted vibrations that deal internal damage to soft (living) targets. Targets struck with a sonic disruptor suffer damage and must make a constitution save or suffer intense nausea. The Challenge Level of the save is dependant on the size of the weapon.

Rail Gun and Rail Cannon: Rail guns are large weapons, usually very long and cumbersome. Charged particles in the housing pass to a magnetic rail in the barrel that, once fired, accelerates the particle at extraordinary speeds for tremendous damage. A rail cannon is a large version of the same.

Laser Pistol, Rifle, & Cannon: These are solid state beam weapons using highly focused pulses of light. Technological advances in focusing of the beam are capable of burning holes completely through a target or superheating air particles around a target with a wider beam creating a concussive blast. Laser rifles have a range of line of sight, potentially hitting targets five miles away in an earth like environment, or at greater distances in the vacuum of space.

BODY ARMOR

Modern body armor is made from dense synthetic fibers, making it highly resistant to small caliber gunfire and tiny fragments let out from being outside of the maximum damage radius of explosive devices. Most armor is considered light but offers the effect of medium ancient armor. Heavier armors reduce mobility but also increase resistance to larger caliber fire. Body armor reduces bullet damage rather than making one harder to "hit" with a weapon. This damage reduction is equal to the armor's AC value.

TABLE 13.4 BODY ARMOR

Type	AC	Damage Reduction	Weight	Cost‡
Level 1	2	2	10 lbs.	500
Level 2	4	4	20 lbs.	1000
Level 3	6	6	30 lbs	2000

‡ Value is in gold, dollars, euros, credits or whatever valuation the campaign uses.

Level 1 Body Armor: This body armor is easily concealed under normal clothing. This anti-ballistic armor is useful against most small caliber handgun type wounds, though is ineffective vs. edged weapons or slow moving projectiles such as arrows or crossbow bolts. Level 1 armor does not protect against concussive blast, merely projectiles and ballistic fragments. Level 1 body armor offers an armor class of 2 vs. melee and slow moving missiles.

Level 2 Body Armor: Worn by light infantry, security and law enforcement, this armor may include knee and elbow pads, as well as groin and head protection such as a Kevlar or steel helmet. This body armor protects against most handguns and offers fair protection against spray from low caliber sub machine gun fire. It is bulkier and harder to conceal than Level 1 body armor. Level 2 body armor offers an AC 4 vs. melee weapons and slow moving missiles.

Level 3 Body Armor: This armor can stop a high velocity rifle bullet. Heavy ceramic trauma plates are built in the front, back and sides of the vest. The armor has a steel collar to protect the throat, and comes with knee pads, elbow pads, groin guard, and helmet. Level 3 Body Armor offers an AC 6 vs. melee weapons and slow moving missiles such as arrows and javelins.

COMBAT & EQUIPMENT

Single Fire

Single fire involves taking a single shot with the firearm. Single fire is capable with all firearms. A character may take a single fire shot and still move half their distance as in a normal combat round.

Double Tap

A double tap is capable with semi automatic weapons and double action revolvers. The character suffers a -3 to hit with their first shot, and a -6 to their second shot. The character may still move half of their movement when attempting a double tap but with an additional -2 to their attack roll.

Two Weapon Firing

When using two small weapons such as pistols a character may attempt to fire both weapons in a single round. Normal two weapon penalties apply. A character may not double tap and fire two weapons at the same time. The character may still move half of their movement rate when attempting to fire both weapons, though at an additional -2 to their attack roll.

Burst Fire

Burst fire is available for submachine guns, rifles, carbines, machine guns and miniguns. Depending on the weapon type, the rules for burst fire differ. An attacker choosing to use burst fire with anything other than a machine gun or minigun will make three attacks against one target. The first attack is made with no penalty. The second attack is made with a -2 on the "to hit" roll while the third attack is made with a -3 on the "to hit" roll.

An attacker choosing to use burst fire with a machine gun or mingun takes a -5 penalty to their attack roll and expends a number of rounds of ammunition equal to 1/3rd of the loaded capacity of the weapon. If there are less than 100 bullets remaining in a weapon, the burst still occurs but the weapon's ammunition is totally depleted. If there are 30 or less bullets remaining, burst fire cannot be used. Burst affects a cone 5 ft. wide at the muzzle of the weapon extending to 20 ft. wide at the end of the weapons first range increment. Burst fire is ineffective beyond the weapon's second range increment.

Unlike direct fire that requires careful aim, burst fire with a machine gun or minigun is a controlled attempt to harm as many enemies in the field of fire as possible. The firer makes an attack roll in burst fire mode, adding their level and dexterity modifiers and subtracting the burst fire attack penalty of -5.

All targets within the cone of the burst (equal to 1/3rd of the loaded capacity of the firearm) must make dexterity save vs. firer's attack roll or take the listed weapon damage. A successful save means the target has completely avoided the deadly lead. A critical failure (target rolls a natural 1 on their save) means the target must also make a successful constitution or physical save vs. the level of the firer or take the listed dice of damage in constitution damage as well as hit point damage (monsters take no constitution damage)!

Burst Fire vs. a Single Target

When the burst fire mode is used against a single target, the target's save is reduced by -5, modified of course by any cover that the target occupies, or weapon penalties related to the use and firing of the firearm. Such firing penalties may include firing from the hip, or firing on the move.

The "Called Shot"

Called shots may only be made with modern weaponry using a single shot firing mode. This is due to the fact that the rifling or technology of the weapon, its sighting systems, and the reliability of ammunition is such that a "called shot may be made." Primitive weaponry up to and including flintlock rifles is difficult to achieve due to the spotty nature of primitive black powder.

Called shots may only be made if the character takes the time to aim and fire. The attacker must remain stationary in their firing stance for one full round before making their called shot. The firer takes a -8 to their attack roll on top of any range increment penalties that apply.

Effect: A successful called shot deals the weapons listed ammunition damage in constitution damage plus weapon damage, unless the target makes a successful constitution roll vs. the attacker's level. If the constitution save is successful, the PC still suffers the listed ammunition damage, but avoids a more catastrophic wound and possibly instant death (monsters take no constitution damage)!

Special: Called shots may not be made with light or heavy machine guns unless these machine guns are also affixed with telescopic scopes. They may not be made when in "burst fire" mode.

GRENADES, ROCKETS, AND EXPLOSIVES

Damage Radius

All grenades, rockets, and high explosives, such as plastic explosive or mines, deal damage in a radius starting from where the device exploded. This radius is listed in the various weapon description tables above. Targets within the first 10 ft. of radius take full damage, with the die of damage reduced by 1 for every 10 ft. increment. For example, a fragmentation grenade has a damage radius of 30 ft. Targets within 0- 10 ft. take 3d6 points of damage, targets within 11-20 ft. take 2d6 points of damage, and targets between 21 and 30 ft. take 1d6 points of damage. Targets of grenades, rockets, and high explosives are allowed a dexterity or physical saving throw for half damage only if they have room to move, duck, crouch, or otherwise reduce the effect.

In other words, a stick of dynamite exploding in a closed 10 ft. by 10 ft. cell allows no opportunity for a dexterity save to avoid its blast!

Special: In addition to the listed damage, high explosive weaponry detonated within range of a target has a chance of stunning and deafening the target. On a successful hit all targets within the damage radius listed must make a constitution or physical save with a challenge level equal to +1 for every die of damage that the explosive device deals. Failure indicates that the target is stunned for 1d4 rounds. Failure by more than five under the Challenge Level indicates that the target is also deafened for 1d8 rounds, suffering all penalties that apply.

1	2	3
4	Target	5
6	7	8

Oops!

Rockets, grenades and other high explosives still do damage in their blast radius even if they miss their intended target. Regardless of a hit or miss, the grenade still lands forward of the thrower in a distance equal to at least the first hurled range increment. Roll 1d8 to determine where the grenade actually landed in relation to the target, adding 5 ft. for each five points that the attacker missed their target. If the hurler or any allies happen to be within the blast radius when it detonates, all normal saves, and damage apply.

On a roll of natural 1, there is a 25% chance that the weapon misfires, automatically dealing full damage to the attacker and all allies within the radius. A successful roll means that the weapon was a "dud" and failed to operate as designed.

CHAPTER 14 – ADVANCING THE GAME

Castles & Crusades is a role playing game and as such requires a game master. The game master is called the Castle Keeper or simply, the CK. The Castle Keeper's challenge is to create a scenario, usually through adventures, able to both challenge the skills of the players and to capture their imaginations. The scenario is not a contest between the CK and the Player, but rather one in which the CK oversees and fairly adjudicates the course of play. The process of adjudication requires that the Castle Keeper manage a host of things at the same time: the type of game, the design of the adventure, the NPCs, the party itself, the flow of information to and from the party, the combat and monsters. The CK must do this while maintaining an ability to quickly react to unexpected events brought about by player actions. In order to achieve these goals, the Castle Keeper must have a firm grip on how to play role playing games in general and **Castles & Crusades** in particular.

BEGINNING THE GAME

Beginnings are the hard part. To start a game of **Castles & Crusades**, it's best to find a place where all the participants can be comfortable. A kitchen table, an office, or similar environment usually serves very nicely. The area in question should be a little removed from household traffic as the game can, at times, become a bit noisy as players battle monsters for the gold and glory that is the result of such contests.

The number of participants ranges from 2 (the Castle Keeper and 1 Player) to as many as the CK desires to handle. Usually four players offer a good range of characters and classes; that puts 5 people at the table, four players, and one Castle Keeper. Beginning CKs should probably limit the number of players for the first few games as the game can become quite confusing until everyone grasps the rules and understands the flow of play.

Once a location and the number of players are determined, the CK must sit down and design an adventure. Its best to prepare for the adventure before meeting, as it usually takes a few hours at the utmost, but can be as quick as a few minutes, depending on how complex the desired adventure. The CK must keep several things in mind when designing an adventure: the level of the player characters, the number of player characters, type of game, and type of adventure. All of these enter into the design process. Base the adventure on the number of players attending the game; a difficult adventure with only one player is likely to lead to that character's demise.

Beginning play usually starts with low level characters, but you may choose to start of at a slightly higher level. In any case, the following outlines a basic approach to adventures.

Low-level adventures (level 1-3): Base the design of these games on the character's hit points and equipment. The extra abilities that characters have are helpful, but in the end the character must survive long enough to use them. When designing adventures for low-level characters, always use monsters with low hit dice. The adventure can be as complex as desired but the combatants and the traps must never exceed the ability of the character's to overcome them.

Note: Many CKs assume that they can run monsters of high hit dice but who have low hit points in low-level games. This is not the case. Monsters with a high hit dice have an increased chance to hit, and usually manage to kill the characters faster.

Mid-level adventures (level 4-8): The design of these games is far more open. The characters are able to use many of their abilities and these compliment the increased hit points and their increased ability to hit the enemy. Most monsters, from low hit dice to high, are useful in these games. If they are low hit dice, there should be more of them; if higher hit dice, less of them.

High-level adventures (level 9+): High level games run the gamut and include hit dice and numbers of almost any monsters. The adventure can still be simple or it can be very complex, though often prep time for these games takes longer as the monsters or NPCs are more complicated and the write ups require more attention. Preparation is very important for high-level games as there is an increased complexity of the monsters, spells, magic items, and abilities.

Once the Castle Keeper has gathered this information, it is time to determine what type of adventure to run the players through and get to work designing it.

PLOTTING THE ADVENTURE

An adventure generally involves a challenge presented to the characters in the guise of a task to be completed. There are an almost infinite number of tasks to choose from. Indeed, the type of task is limited only by the imagination of the Castle Keeper; they include retrieving items, rescuing persons, plundering dungeons, destroying evil, solving mysteries, etc.

In working on an adventure, it is a good rule of thumb to follow the same designs that a short story, movie, or novel follows. Draw up a brief outline of what the challenge is, where it takes place, who the participants are, and how the characters must overcome it. It's usually advantageous to expand on these notes and offer details that the CK needs to run the game a little more effective. If the adventure begins in a stable, and the stable master is a point of contact, its best to write down the stable master's name, perhaps a quick description of him and his motives. In this way, when the characters ask questions of him or the CK, the answers are readily available.

The Castle Keeper should always attempt to make the story compelling; catching the interest of the players is paramount to running a smooth game. In this regard it is important to know your audience. A Castle Keeper that spends a great deal of time designing a dungeon adventure is going to find it hard to run a group of players who really don't like dungeons. Though the story/plot/adventure should not be beholden to the particular desires of each player, making an attempt at crafting an adventure that people want to play is the first step toward capturing your audience.

Most players don't really care about the setting, they simply want to run a challenging adventure, slay the evil monsters, reap a whirlwind of treasure, and make ready for the next foray.

There are three simple steps to crafting a quick adventure. Follow these for the quick write up or expand upon them for more detailed adventures.

1) Establish the plot device by determining what the character's object is: rescue the princess, slay a dragon, banish a ghost, etc. This object does not have to be a noble goal of rescue or a quest. Many of the most enjoyable adventures do not involve any kind of moral quandary, but rather emphasize sheer fun. Plundering the dungeon of all its ancient wealth is often sufficient to gain a night's fun.
2) Place the object in a setting such as a dungeon, town, wilderness, or old ruins. Dungeon adventures are those that take place underground, in castles or contained areas. Overland adventures are those that take place in cities, towns, in the wilderness, along a road. Both are very different, involving many nuances to run correctly (see **Chapters 5 and 6**).
3) Determine what challenges the players must overcome to achieve the object: slay a dragon, loot the treasure chamber, overcome traps, and find the dungeon. Like plot devices, the number of challenges are virtually limitless. These challenges often make or break a game. Really interesting monster encounters morph simple, mundane plots into truly exciting and memorable escapades.

Once the object, setting, and challenges are determined, the Castle Keeper is prepared to run the game. It is entirely up to the CK how much detail to place upon the adventure - fleshing out the skeleton so to speak. Names, backgrounds, descriptions of persons, places, and things, etc. can enhance play and give it a sense of being. Often this tone emerges during the course of the play whether the CK desires it or not. Players naturally ask questions, the more questions asked, the more detail is required from the CK. As noted, this preparation can take hours or just minutes; but having some type of preparation is essential to capturing the evening's fun.

Open-ended vs. Linear plots

Adventure plots are often open-ended and when one adventure is completed another is unearthed in the completion of the adventure. The characters who uncover a treasure trove may find a magic scroll that contains the map to the location of another dungeon and thus the CK establishes the adventure hook for the next session. Open-ended adventures must be adaptable as the CK almost never knows what players will do

when confronted with one challenge or the other. Being fluid and adjusting the adventure is part of a night's play. Some plots are quite linear and require that the Castle Keeper keep the characters on track and achieve preset goals before they can go to the next area. These are more difficult and are often derailed due to player character actions that are outside the circle of the CK's planning or even thinking.

One Night Stands

These games are simple adventures played out in the course of a single gaming session. They often involve pre-generated characters, or characters the players have played before.

Story Arc: A story arc involves several gaming sessions in which the adventure is too complicated to wrap up quickly.

Campaign: These are ongoing games that take the same characters through play in multiple adventures, some one night stands, some story arcs, throughout the life of their character. They take place over multiple gaming sessions and last from a few months to several years.

The Road Goes On

One of the objects in C&C, for the players at least, is level advancement. Beginning at low levels and moving up and beyond is part of the fun. As characters gain levels they gain power, prestige and more abilities with which to continue on and tackle ever great challenges. If there is an object in RPGs, beyond having fun, it would have to be advancing in levels. In planning the adventure, the Castle Keeper must keep this in mind. Design the adventure for a single night's play, a story arc that takes place over several sessions, or even a campaign that embarks the characters on a lengthy multi-session adventure. All are perfectly valid approaches and play their role in the RPG experience, whether used separately or together.

Example: Steve designed a simple one night adventure that took place in the village of End's Meet in the Darkenfold. The adventure involved the characters retrieving a stolen lock box from a small band of orcs in the Muddy Wash Creek basin. The session ran for 4 hours. During the next week everyone announced that they wanted to keep playing the same adventure so another one night session pitted the characters against an owlbear that stalked the village's livestock. This adventure led to several adventures in the forests south of the village. Eventually the characters began exploring the Darkenfold forest where they met the wizard master of the Bowlgaare orcs, the very orc tribe they originally fought in the Basin. Several sessions turned into a long string of interconnected adventures that eventually developed into a full fledged campaign. After a year of adventures, the characters have achieved **6th level** and are rapidly coming to command much of the Darkenfold. The adventures only continue.

Outside of the convention circuit where people gather to play only for a few hours, the campaign game seems to dominate. Players enjoy their characters and enjoy developing them over time. Furthermore, the Castle Keeper is able to explore new avenues through use of treasure and magic. The development of the ongoing game does not need to end with the completion of a campaign arc. A great quest might end, but the game can go on. The characters are able to meet new challenges and embark upon even greater, or lesser, journeys that bring them further down the road to renown and glory.

No matter the type of adventure, one night session, story arc, or campaign, it is essential that the Castle Keeper capture the audience in the very beginning with a good adventure hook.

THE HOOK

An adventure is much like a story and it is usually best to begin the adventure design with some type of hook, something that will grab the interest of the players. Below are several examples of hooks for characters of varying levels. Keep in mind that these are only samples and the CK's imagination is the only limiting factor to the adventure hooks.

Sample adventure hooks

Low-level: The small village of Willowbreak on the Powder River relies upon hunting to sustain the villagers. In an attempt to build a small hunting post outside of town, the villagers have recently unearthed a small burial mound. Ever since then, ghouls have been terrorizing the people. They call on the characters to clear out the mound and as payment they offer them anything they find in the mound.

Low-level: The small walled town of Petersboro has recently suffered a number of robberies. The locals hire the characters to find out who is responsible. In the course of the investigation, they learn about a guild house of thieves, recently started, that is in need of plundering. Payment comes in treasure captured and a small stipend from the city.

Low-level: While traveling the length of Walk Water Creek one of the characters stumbles into a crevice. Upon closer examination, they have unearthed the opening to a dungeon. The promise of hidden treasure and danger tempt them to enter and plunder its depths fighting whatever monsters use the place as a lair.

Mid-level: Upon the horizon, the characters spy several columns of smoke. While investigating, they learn that the smoke is coming from a camp of slavers nestled on an abandoned beach. They have a number of demi-humans and humans in shackles. There is a boat several hundred feet off shore. The objective is to rescue the unfortunates and seize the boat.

Mid-level: A cleric has unearthed the evil doings of a secret cult in the town of Fiume. He uses his influence with the party, through one of their own members he knows, or through hiring them, to find the cult's headquarters and destroy it and the cult members to boot.

Mid-level: Maidens have gone missing in the town of Sinsich. Every 14 days a house is broken into and a young woman kidnapped. A close friend or family member of one of the characters suffers this fate. A wizard is behind the kidnappings, using several gargoyles under his command to steal the women. He is using the women in his experiments. The characters must solve the mystery of who is behind the kidnappings, slay, or capture the wizard and his minions and save the maidens.

High-level: While adventuring through the wilderness the characters stumble upon an ancient abandoned city. There is no sign of life. Investigation reveals the city's inhabitants fled or died centuries ago but a tribe of half intelligent wild apes remain. They attack the party at every chance, trying to keep them from exploring the city. In the end, they summon their demi-god, a gigantic 20 foot tall ape.

High-level: After a long and difficult dungeon crawl, the characters discover a hidden tomb. Within it, upon the floor, is a large flat door. Opening the door, the characters discover a pocket dimension. The dimension is occupied by a host of eldritch creatures that the characters must encounter and overcome through reason or battle.

High-level: Throughout many long adventures the characters, who have been exposed to tales of the horrors of the Green Wizard, stumble upon his hidden tower. It is up to them to destroy this evil mage and cleanse the land of his minions.

Epic-level: The characters have discovered that the ancient city of Aufstrag houses the bones of a long lost companion. They must go there and fetch the bones back for resurrection. The bones lie where the companion fell, in the massive forge. The characters must discover this fact and traverse the dangerous fortress dungeon to achieve their goal.

Once the Castle Keeper outlines the adventure, fleshing out those parts they feel are necessary, all that remains is to find chairs at the table and begin play. What follows is a very brief sample of how to start an adventure with the adventure hook.

ADVENTURE TYPES

There are many types of adventures in C&C, but they basically boil down to three: overland, city, and dungeon.

Overland: Overland adventures are those that take place in the great outdoors. These include adventures in the plains, mountains, swamps, forests, or any terrain type. They include airborne and water adventures. They generally take place over several days or weeks of game time, as characters travel from one locale to another. The Castle Keeper is generally responsible for tracking time, running random encounters, charting weather (if such detail is desired), and similar tasks. The players must keep track of food used, equipment, and be ready for multiple types of encounters. Though more labor intensive than dungeon adventures, overland tends to offer more variety both both player and CK and less monotony.

City: City adventures take place in small villages, towns, cities, or metropolises. They lend themselves to campaign games very well, and easily incorporate dungeon adventures into their make up. City adventures tend to be more labor intensive for the CK than either dungeon or overland, mainly because the preparation time is greatly increased. CKs must know hosts of NPCs in order to have some kind of legitimate reaction to character questions. There are less random encounters with monsters, but host of encounters with the city's inhabitants and these require far more reaction from the CK. The player too is faced with many encounters and situations in which perhaps his combat skills are not suited. City adventures tend to be slower, involve more NPC interaction and are characterized by subterfuge and politics.

Dungeon: Dungeon adventures place the characters underground, usually in a man made complex but may include or be a cavern complex. Dungeon adventures are perfect for one night stands or story arcs as they usually only require 1-2 gaming sessions to conquer a dungeon. The CK needn't bother with tracking time in days, but may find it necessary to keep up with hours in the day. However, the confined space generally means the Castle Keeper must track the movement of monsters in relation to the characters. Random encounters occur and the combats, restricted to tight spaces, require more micro-management in that some weapons, such as the two-handed sword may be unwieldy in small confined spaces, and the blast radius of spells may be different from those used outdoors. Players have a chance to use many skills not useful outdoors, such as opening locks.

For information on how to develop all three of these settings and how to integrate them, refer to **Chapters 5 and 6**.

BALANCING CHALLENGES

Once the adventure is designed and the characters are made, there remains only the actual play of the game. Embarking upon the adventure brings the characters face to face with innumerable challenges. They must overcome these challenges themselves, using their character abilities, spells, skills, and their own imagination. It is up the Castle Keeper to make certain that the challengers are interesting, but also that there is a proper balance with the size and make up of the party as well as the rewards offered.

Many games offer challenge ratings for monsters and the goal is to set in stone what level a party should be before it tackles this monster or that. This approach does not fit the mold established in all the **Castles & Crusades** literature. In fact, this restricts the freedom of movement that the Castle Keeper must at all times command in order to run fun and fluid games. There are a number of simple concept rules to follow in order to lay out a good, well balanced, and fun encounter/challenge.

KNOW THE PARTY: This concept is the most essential ingredient to balancing an encounter. The CK should learn the party's relative size, the character levels, hit points, armor class,

and a basic understand of the character's skills. It is often best to make a chart that lists players and their character's statistics for quick reference during preparation and play.

KNOW THE MONSTERS/TRAP: When putting together an encounter, it is not necessary to match the hit dice of the monsters directly with the level of the characters. In fact, monsters tend to be slightly weaker than characters because their abilities are relatively static and they have no real attribute bonuses. Characters are going to be able to take many more actions because their abilities are very flexible. This concept begins to break down at higher levels, as high level monsters have a wide pool of abilities to draw from; however, even that pool is limited as most monster abilities are situational abilities. The CK must take these abilities under consideration, however, as some monsters have a great many abilities. Even if a creature has a low hit dice, if it is able to cast a number of spells, has combat maneuvers, and is able to strike multiple opponents, it is actually more powerful than its hit dice implies. Understand the monster, its strengths, and weaknesses before pitting the party against it. It is not necessary to play test the creature, but get a solid grasp on what it can and cannot do.

If the monster's fighting abilities allow for more damage in one round than the characters have hit points, the monster or trap is too strong.

FLEXIBILITY: The Castle Keeper must be flexible. Often encounters run foul and the characters and the game can come crashing down far quicker than the CK intended or expected. Or conversely, the characters may overcome the encounter with hardly an effort. The danger in this is not that the monster might accidentally or even purposely kill the characters. Nor is it that they overcome the monster too fast. The danger is in spoiling the fun of the encounter. Encounters that aren't very challenging or that are impossibly hard are irritating and do nothing but disrupt a night's play. If the characters are being battered too much and are not able to get a good strike in, adjust the creature's hit points, or even armor class if you can. Perhaps allow for a secondary armor class on the creature's belly. Conversely, if the characters are pounding too fast, add AC or hit points or even an extra spell-like ability. It is the CKs task to make sure everyone has fun; part of that task is adjudicating the rules to fit the game.

NOTE: In situations where an encounter is too hard, never bring in an NPC to save the party or character. This is tantamount to the Castle Keeper running his own character in his own game.

SAMPLE ADVENTURE

Tipping Lances

This encounter takes place on the open plains; on the edge of a civilized land. If playing in the world of Aihrde, the adventure is designed to begin in Kayomar, upon the edge of the Eldwood. There should be 4-6 characters of **10th-12th level**. The Castle Keeper must take stock of the power of the party and adjust the number of creatures encountered in order to make the game more or less challenging.

This windmill served a local community as a grist mill, grinding up wheat to make bread. Here, Perrin of Halfast lived. Retired from a lifetime's service with the Lords of Kayomar, he sought to live a simple life. But he kept his weaponry and armor and some minor treasure he found of great value. Recently a Kain's Henchman, a devil of not uncommon power, visited, and killed Perrin. He came in search of a map (or book) that Perrin possessed. But after slaying the erstwhile Paladin, the Henchman could not find what he sought after. He lingers in the mill now, waiting for some gift of inspiration that might lead him to his desires.

The map/book is actually within a magical rune box. Creations of the dwarves, these boxes contained sand encrypted with magic that bore the runes of their magical language. Perrin converted his books to such hidden devices to keep them from the enemy. Once the box is found, opened and the proper word uttered, the sand takes the shape of the book/map and is fully readable or viewable by the user. The rune box itself is in the mill, lying on the floor of the Mill Room where the devil, not knowing what it was, tossed it.

The Kain's Henchman dresses as a knightly courtier, shape changed into the form of a human. The body of Perrin he cast out in the grasses, not more than a hundred feet from the head of the mill.

> **The rolling hills and grasslands of the Great Plains stretch for miles in all directions. The sun beats down continually; the rolling grasslands offering no shade or respite. But the heat is broken by the wind that seems to continually blow from the west, carrying the hint of moisture on it, breaking over the mountain's watershed as it does. But the merciless wind never gives up and blows continually. Further south, you see the dark, hazy, edge of what must be a forest and upon a hill, not but a few miles from your present location, a large windmill, with its giant arms spinning slowly, looping ever around.**

The party approaches the windmill. Before they arrive, they spy a cottage, a well, and some split-rail fencing that seems abandoned as several rails lie upon the ground. No signs of life permeate the dwellings and all seems abandoned. As they approach, the slowly moving turbine of the wind mill creaks and groans, greeting the party with a loud thumping sound every time it turns around. Inside, several teeth have broken free of the wheels, making the whole mill thump during its constant rotation.

Perrin of Halfast

If they search the area around the mill before going in, they have a good chance of discovering the body of Perrin. To discover the body requires a ranger to make a successful track check (CL 2) or anyone else to make a successful search check (CL 8).

The body lies in the grass, face down. It is somewhat blackened as with fire. There is a stench hanging around the body that calls to mind armory fire pits, very hot ashes and the like. The body has numerous puncture wounds, wide and deep. It is about 2 days old, though to determine this requires another successful attribute check (wisdom or tracking for a ranger).

Cottage

The road leads directly up to the windmill and cottage. The cottage stands beside the road and about 75 feet from the entrance to the windmill. A well worn path leads from the mill to the cottage. The whole area around the entrances is barren of grass, sure signs of long habitation (CL 2).

> **The door to the cottage is slightly ajar. The sweet scent of burnt sugar comes from inside. Everything is quiet within. Looking within, the place is obviously a one room building. The fireplace is cool but the room is in complete disarray, furniture everywhere and pots and pans are scattered about.**

Perrin was in the cottage when the devil arrived at his doorstep. At first, he did not know what it was and invited it into his home for a meal. Once within, the creature attacked the warrior who fended it off with his pots and pans. He managed to fetch his sword from the wall and drove the devil into the yard. A ranger can determine the course of the struggle with a successful track check (CL 9). The ground is dry and difficult to leave an imprint.

There is little of value in the room. The furniture is a wreck but there is plenty of coal in a rack against the wall.

Windmill

The windmill is a simple structure of three floors. Its mechanism is rudimentary, with the grindstone on the Mill floor and the crank assembly on the third floor. Grain is brought in and dumped into the mill pond on the mill floor; the wind turns the assembly and rolls the giant stone over the grain, grinding it to grist. Perrin bags it up by shovel and hand.

The devil searched the complex but now has taken up a perch in the third floor, not knowing what to do next. He watches and waits. When the characters enter the area, he is aware of them but makes no overt moves to attack, waiting to see if they know where the map might be.

Mill Floor

The giant millstone, attached to a crossbar and attached to a giant pole that disappears into the ceiling above, dominates this octagonal room. A pond, built around the millstone serves to hold the grain being ground up by the windmill's mechanism. Several hundred sacks are stacked along the far wall. Hay covers the floor. Several shovels and other tools are scattered about the room. On the far wall, several hooks hold hundreds of tie ropes (for the sacks) and other various and sundry items. The rune box lies on the floor under these hooks.

A ladder leads to a trap door above. The door is open. The whole room smells of ash, grain, and blood.

The battle from the cottage carried over to the windmill and into the Mill Room. Here, Perrin attempted to flee to the second floor but the devil slew him. There is blood at the foot of the ladder. A cursory check by anyone in the party reveals this fact.

The rune box is easy enough to spot. Though small - no more than 8 inches across and 4 inches wide - it is very much out of place on the floor. The rune box itself is made of plain wood, probably cherry, though whoever made the box sanded and stained it. There is a simple rune on the lid, a "J" in the Lawful Good languages. The command word is "Open," spoken in Aenochian.

Any attempt to detect evil reveals something evil up above. If the party finds the box and opens it, the Henchman immediately reacts. If discovered, or if he reacts due to the box opening, the Henchman calls down the ladder, asking the party for aid. He takes the guise of a courtier from Kayomar, coming down the ladder. He carries a long, heavy pole, ornately decorated. He acts overjoyed to see the party, ignoring anything they say or commands they may give him until he is in their presence.

When with the party, he immediately demands the rune box, confessing he heard them talking about it, whether they were actually talking about it or not. The Henchman changes tone as needed, trying to sweet talk the rune box from the characters if he can, but ordering them otherwise if he must.

If the characters give him the box he immediately leaves, heading up the road. If they do not, he alters his form into its true shape and attacks the party.

> **KAIN'S HENCHMAN** *(This lawful evil creature's vital stats are HD 9d8, AC 26, HP 65. His primary attributes are mental. He attacks with the Bilun polearm for 2d6+2 points of damage. The pole arm can drain strength. The Henchman is also able to shape change, has an SR 12, is immune to elements and possesses the following spell-like abilities: detect chaos/good (perm); fire storm (2/day); glyph of warding (2/day); hold person (3/day). They cast as a 12th level caster.)*

The Rune Box

In the early days of their wars with the Goblins, the Dwarves sought many ways to use the magical runes. Their most skilled craftsmen used sand as paper. Setting thin layers of sand upon the curtains of glass, they cast the runes upon it. Through their crafts they bound the grains of sand so that one grain held true to another; when bound, they seemed as thin sheets of paper. In order to protect the sand-sheets, they gathered the loose sand up and placed them in small boxes. When opened, the box seemed filled with sand only, but upon uttering the proper command word, the sand rose in a swirling mist until it took the

shape of the original sheet and revealed the rune, message, or map embossed upon it.

The rune boxes are made of stout woods, generally from the ancient Peril Trees. Beautifully crafted and embossed with gold or silver, and set with platinum and gems, the boxes alone were worth small fortunes. The linings consist of softened hide, where the sand of the sand-sheet lies. It is impossible to remove the sand by pouring it out or removing it. If someone attempts to take out a pinch or separate any of the sand from the box, they fail. A magical trail of dust connects the removed sand from the sand in the box so that it is able to trail back.

The sand sheet acts as a magical scroll. Upon uttering the command word, the box opens and the sand rises out in a thin, almost misty shape. It coalesces into the shape of a simple map/book. The map leads to a place called the Frieden Anhohe. Marked in clear, distinct letters are the following words: "Here lie the bones of the House Pendegrantz. Lords and Ladies of great renown. Beneath the great tree their uncounted wealth shall be sacrosanct forever. JF, 793."

Any cleric, paladin, or bard is likely to know whom the House Pendegrantz are: nobles born of Kings, wealthy and holy. The place would serve them as a shrine where they may ask the blessings of the gods. Any bard, upon a successful legend lore check (CL 6) knows something of the history of the house, and is aware of the wealth and power that must reside therein. Anyone else can make a simple wisdom check (CL 10) to determine whether or what they know of the House Pendegrantz.

2nd floor

This floor possesses a bed, small table with several chairs, a cook stove, a large barrel of ale and several mugs on the walls. More tools, used for the maintenance of the windmill, line the halls. A large barrel of thick oil stands in one corner. The windows are all barred shut.

Beneath the bed, in a simple locked trunk (pick locks CL 7), are Perrin's valuables. Here is has the following: a suit of chainmail +2, a mace of disruption, a potion of heal, and a neatly folded up cloak of charisma. There is a bag of gold with 220gp in it and a ring with a green diamond on it worth 250gp. His tabard is in the trunk as well and shows a deer on sable over a wreath with the words: Liberty or Death.

3rd floor

There is little on this floor except the giant mechanism that turns and operates the mill. There is only room to move around the walls of the room, and it all must be done at a slouch. There is nothing of value here.

The map in the Rune Box leads one to the Eldwood and is the opening sequence to the **Malady of Kings** adventure, published separately. If the CK does not wish to use the Malady of Kings, the map works just as well for any adventure the Castle Keeper has concocted.

MOODS OF PLAY

The mood of any role playing game is the core element of how much fun it is. The mood is that act of theatre when the player becomes engrossed in the play and outcome of the adventure even as they might a good movie. The importance of mood is covered in detail in the **Players Handbook**, but understanding the tools of the trade in establishing that mood is as important as understanding the role mood plays at the gaming table.

Whether carefully laid out and meticulously planned, or whether an adventure developed on the fly, the CK's object lies in capturing the players interest and challenging them to overcome any series of obstacles. These challenges culminate in what is best styled the moment of adventure; that moment, or long series of moments that bring the whole party to the table by engaging their characters in some type of threat. This danger need not be one posed by a powerful monster; a group of creatures, a complicated trap or series of traps, a mystery the players cannot easily comprehend pose equally engaging moments. Mid-level characters offer the CK a whole new host of opportunities to develop their story arc and expand these moments of adventure.

Often the CK dominates the table with background descriptions, plot points, NPC personalities, playing one side against 4 or 5 different players. This can lead to something that seems close to table hogging. Avoiding this is a hallmark of a good CK. Players

who sit at a dogmatic CK's table who responds only to form and function become bored and soon find creative ways to express their natural freedoms. This usually involves constant interruptions and the ignoble end to what may have been a good game. Adjudicating a game with a relaxed, comfortable demeanor, allowing humor to roam the table, sets a stage where the player is able to accept, rather than endure, all the CK's necessary noise. This in turn allows the CK to create a mood at the table that the players willingly work with and which allows them to play their characters even better.

The CK should never view themselves as school marms, but rather something more akin to an interactive story-teller. They sit at the head of a troop spinning a yarn, waiting for the interaction of other yarnsters, all working to tell a tale of wondrous deeds. It is the CK's unique task to guide the tone of the story. With this in mind, the CK should avoid shouting down players, bossing them around, establishing draconian rules of conduct at the table, being inflexible with turns in combat, and not allowing any interpretations of the rules. Discussion of how a spell works, or what a particular reaction might be is always good for the game. The experienced CK often turns to the players, asking their opinion of the outcome of whatever is in question. Not only is this simply polite, but it is realistic; assuming that the CK is the end all of understanding of how a game is played is a bit arrogant. The good CK guides the story, making certain that it continues moving on and does not bog down over any one point, no matter how small or how large.

More importantly, this interaction allows the players to participate in the game fully. If they are part of the gaming process they are far more likely to enjoy it and make it enjoyable. Furthermore, constantly deciding the whys and wherefores of how this might work or that might work exhausts CKs of their creativity, often forcing them down a road of rules lawyering which is the last thing that should happen.

It is important to note however, that the CK does serve as the final judge for any rule question or discussion. Understanding this is imperative as arguments about outcome can continue for many hours, spoiling anyone's ability to play anything. The Castle Keeper is the final judge.

Elements of Mood

A comfortable table allows the CK to work on those elements of the game that create an exciting mood that players enjoy.

Description: Descriptions remain one of the key elements to creating an exciting mood for any game. Using language that is simple, direct, but evocative helps to conjure images in the mind that people keep with them as the game unfolds. In describing settings it's important to remember to include some trivial things in the same breath as important things. The nature of the clouds can be as memorable as the massive, tusked ogre charging at the party. Use short, powerful sentences and spend as little time as possible in getting the point of the scene, person, place, or thing across as possible. Long belabored descriptions often bore the pants off of players forcing them into a destructive mode.

Combat: Combat remains the most powerful tool at the table. It is the car explosion of the movie. Combat should be fast, immersed in quick descriptions, involve the players tremendously, and be lively. A good combat session brings the players fully into the game, for their characters are at risk and they all take a keen interest even in what the other players are doing, for where one goes, the others may follow. The pace must be constant in order to capture the mood.

In order to create and maintain a good pace, it is important to discard the literal interpretation of the rules before the battle begins. Players develop new methods of using weapons, equipment, spells, and ability checks that no one can possibly prepare for. This is where the strength of the Siege Engine comes into play, for it rapidly resolves most problems that arise at the table - "Make a strength check." But beyond that do not worry about playing it as the book might seem to describe, when problems come up, rule on them and move on, even if you have to promise players to relook at them after the battle. In order to maintain the battle mood, it cannot be interrupted by a 10, 15, or 20 minute discussion of how this works or that does not.

Move around the table, starting at one end and work all the way around. It is usually best to establish an order and play through it. In this way it allows players time to actually plan for what they are going to do when their time comes and with this small amount of preparation they don't have to thumb through a book to figure out what they should be doing. When their times comes, they are ready. Usually beginning the round at the right hand side of the screen is best. Ask that individual to roll initiative and run his round, then move to the next. This requires the CK to move hosts of monsters simultaneously and requires them to pay attention to all the players at once as the player moving last may be moving to help the first player. Be very flexible in approaching turns, but establishing some type of order that runs under normal circumstances helps tremendously.

Intermingle the combat round with descriptions and allow players to do the same. Throwing out a sentence such as "Your sword tears through the armor, making a bloody ruin of the creature," can easily be followed by "I put my boot on his chest, kick him off my sword and turn to the next." Suddenly the player is involved in the story line as well, adding his or her own color to the canvas. That is the interaction for which every CK should strive.

Keep in mind that, although combat might be the most exciting part of role playing, it is only one part of the large experience of running and playing in **Castles & Crusades**.

Personalities: Most adventures involve meeting at least one, if not many, NPCs. NPCs serve the CK as conduits for information, catalysts for adventure, sources of rewards, and hosts of other functions. At the very least NPCs should possess a name. However, bringing them to life brings a host of fun to the game as suddenly rolls of information turn into exciting encounters in and of themselves. Develop the NPCs with names, descriptions, and a little background material upon

which to build their personality. They do not have to be unique in that each has some strange foible, but they should at least be interesting and possess some basis in believability. Harking back to the discussion on descriptive text, pointing out some special detail amidst a general description goes far. Perhaps the bartender has an unusually long, hooked nose.

Furthermore, making some attempt at animating the NPC with voice and speaking roles, allows the players to better play their own characters and generally brings the hole game and what might be a normal information encounter into sharp focus.

The idea of personalities, good or ill, carry over to monsters and sentient magic items as well.

Interaction: Allowing players to interact in all the sequences of the game is very important. Engaging a player about how they are traveling down the wooded lane just described allows them to participate more in the game. The same goes for the combat round. The dungeon dwelling umber hulk attacking the party deserves death by a character that slices the heel of the beast while he buries his axe in its chest. And NPC interaction is the most important of all. Characters should dominate the conversation in many of these encounters and not be the target of long winded speeches about various conditions of the environment. Keeping players engaged through the characters makes the evening's game far more fun.

The final part of maintaining the mood of a game lies in knowing when to break it off, how to keep the descriptions, encounters, and combat rounds short enough that they do not become a bear to work through. This often comes with experience, but in general keeping an eye out for signs of boredom helps tremendously; these signs, such as doodling, texting, or playing games on the phone are certain signs that it is time to move on.

BALANCE

Balance refers to maintaining a level of challenge in an adventure that is commensurate with the level and abilities of the characters. Keeping this balance in the game is important. Pitting high level characters against small hit dice monsters is as unchallenging as pitting low level characters against high hit dice monsters is deadly. Creating a dungeon adventure for a group of half-elven rangers is not creating an adventure that they can utilize their skills while playing. The Castle Keeper must attempt, in both designing the adventure and running it, to achieve and maintain through the course of play, a balance between both sides of the screen.

Achieving and maintaining game balance is a constant part of the game, as the characters are constantly evolving, usually into high levels with ever greater magic. High level characters (levels 9+) have power, hit points, and experience. Their levels are greater and they can withstand the attacks of powerful monsters. They have survived and as such have a greater chance of continuing to survive all the while offering the CK and the players hosts of options to choose from, spicing up the game. Mid-level characters (levels 4-8) have power and hit points but they still have weaknesses and wear down or fail outright in the face of continuing challenges; they are fun because everyone can do so much more than they could at other levels, but still run a risky gauntlet, even from lesser creatures. The low-level characters (levels 1-3) are seemingly the most challenging to run for they have few abilities, no levels with which to augment those abilities; their hit points are low, so single blows can lay them low and in many instances the players are trying something new and haven't quite learned the ins and outs of a character class. The challenge and the fun, lies in the balance the CK applies to the game.

Low Levels 1-3

Running and playing low level characters is, in many respects, the most fun. Low-level characters test the skill of the CK and player like no other and through the use of the proper planning and fluid role play, the CK and the players cannot help but find the experience of playing and running low-level characters offers breath-taking challenges like no other character level.

In game balance, everything presented is on a scale that is easy to understand. The battles and challenges they face are often over very quickly, not allowing time to drag on while casting complicated spells or allowing wild combat maneuvers to unfold. The preparation time for a CK is negligible when compared to the vastly complicated encounters required to challenge high-level characters. An edge exists in the low-level games because the threat of character death looms over every action. Low-level adventures also offer everyone a fresh start.

Preparing any game can be a time consuming process, each level offering its own challenges. For the low-level, game preparation is important because the CK does not want to create a scenario that is so challenging that it wipes the characters out immediately, nor so weak that they overcome the encounter too quickly. It is much easier to fall into the former trap. When laying out the low-level game the CK must first participate in the creation of the characters with the players or, if they are already created, look to them and make certain they have a good idea of what each player is bringing to the table. In the creation process, it is not necessary to actually 'create' the character but rather take the time to listen to the players and get a good handle on what a character's abilities are and what weapons or tools they use. Things like a horse can certainly benefit a party of adventurers and the CK can use this knowledge to their own benefit.

Balanced design of a low-level character is centered on their hit points and equipment. All the rest of the abilities pale because these two items are necessary to live long enough to use their extra abilities. Players should pay close attention to the way they design; keeping in mind that armor is as important as hit points. Keeping a blow from ever landing reduces the chances of death far greater than having a few more hit points. For the blow that does not strike does no damage and who knows what havoc comes from the blade or claw that lands. In order to manage balance a little more affectively the Castle Keeper may desire to

allow 1st **level** characters to begin play with maximum gold or maximum hit points.

Hit Points: Allowing the characters to begin play with maximum hit points is a very common CK tool, helping balance out the very real threat of death through one blow that 1st **level** characters too often suffer. This allows the fighter to withstand at least one or two blows before falling, as opposed to the fighter beginning play with 4 hit points and dying at the hands of the first orc they encounter. Starting play with maximum hit points are not necessary and the rules do not call for it, but it is a way to hedge their bets. The only problem with this approach is that it skews the character's hit points as they gain in levels so that monsters designed for mid-level play find themselves fighting a little off balance. The chances that the strength or constitution based classes are going to outstrip the rest of the party are great and this offsets the hit dice spread of monsters so that what is challenging for a 3rd **level** fighter is deadly for a 3rd **level** wizard. If play begins with regularly rolled hit points, it is doubly important that the CK be aware of the hit point structure so that killing the fighter with 4 hit points isn't a surprise and encounters can be planning accordingly.

Instead of maxing out hit points at 1st **level**, consider granting characters one or several points of constitution. This allows characters to gain a hit point or two, without affecting combat oriented encounters and gives them a long term, balanced attribute that they cannot help but find useful countless times.

Max Gold: A far better approach for long term game balance is allowing the player characters to begin the game with maximum gold. This allows characters to equip themselves with enough armor and weapons to keep themselves protected. Armor is a key to this. A character with chain mail that gives them a +4 to their AC is going to be much harder to hit and therefore the overall damage caused by the weapon far less.

Equipment plays a huge part in whether this blow lands or not. Good armor can deflect it. A shield can absorb the blow. Missile weapons, and in no small degree polearms, are able to dispatch a foe long before it makes contact. Items such as oil, rope, torches, and the like can be used to keep the enemy at bay as well. Packing a proper rucksack and carrying the proper weapons can turn the tide, keeping the character from death's door. To properly equip of course, the starting character or the continuing adventurer needs gold.

If this choice becomes a reality players must take full advantage of it. Knowing that death awaits a PC at the hands of simple traps and or encounters . . . an orc rolling a natural 20 can kill a 1st **level** fighter quite quickly . . . it behooves them to equip properly. Armor, helms, and shields for those who fight are the most important aspects of their character.

Weapon choice is just as important. A few missile weapons are a must, as these tend to slay enemies at a distance; bows, crossbows, spears, slings and the like all serve the character very well in bloodying the enemy and muting the danger long before it strikes. This is especially true for the wizard or illusionist. They begin play with next to no hit points, so entering into a fray with a dagger, though romantic, is almost a certain ticket to character death. Polearms are handy too, as they can literally keep an enemy at bay and are able to strike before the enemy connects. Equipment compensates for hit points. To better maintain balance, the CK should encourage players to utilize the compensation to survive a little longer.

Of course, most low-level games do not necessitate making new characters, and these decisions, if they were ever considered, have long since been made. For low-level games that are well underway it always behooves both players and CKs to keep the characters well supplied and to advance enough time to allow for proper healing between adventures. A ragtag band of characters can be fun to run in a grinding fight, but the Castle Keeper must be aware of the condition of the combatants or the combat will end far quicker than they anticipated. Grinding fights are best left to mid-level or high-level characters as they can sustain the damage.

The challenging part of low-level games is how to make them challenging without making them boring or too deadly. Knowing the character's abilities and limitations, equipping the characters properly, and establishing their hit points as a known quantity are important, but pale when compared to the structure of the game. The Castle Keeper must be fluid at low levels; willing and able to change the direction of play quickly and without reservation.

CKs should design encounters, or adventures, that are loose; do not make them too structured. Obviously, consider the monsters' abilities and the amount of damage a trap may do and balance this with the character's ability to heal themselves, which at low level is going to be very small. Do not make the encounter too strong; weak encounters are far better because it allows the CK to throw more into the mix, whereas strong encounters, once committed, are there for the duration. A group of 6 1st **level** characters who meet 2 ogres have to contend with those ogres. The fates may smile on their dice and they roll very well, but if they do not, they risk a death with each swing as an ogre's damage is equal to their beginning hit points. This same party who meets 6 orcs on the road does not suffer such a threat for the orcs are much weaker. If the characters are able to overcome the orcs quickly then it is a simple thing to send in a 'second wave,' making the encounter a little more challenging. No one will be the wiser. It's a simple trick and perhaps the oldest in the book; if an encounter, once initiated, isn't gaining the attention the CK desires, simply add more to it. Beginning the encounter with a loose structure allows the CK to do this.

In this same line of thinking, characters must design and play their low-level characters with a realistic expectation of their abilities. Fodius the 1st **level** mage, frustrated at the lack of action from his comrades, decides to leap off the hillock and into the circling warthog-riding goblins. Fodius' funeral is short, for his mangled remains are hard to find. Make certain players know the dangers their actions may cause.

Equipment is the greatest tool given to the CK and the player. It serves as a buffer between wrecking a game and keeping it fun and challenging. The well equipped character gives the CK a target; directing damage at the gear, destroying it, weakening it, reducing it to nothing. In place of wounds to the character wearing the armor, all serve the greater purpose of making the adventure more challenging, without squashing the fun of the players. It's real enough that it keeps them riveted to the game and the wise player can't help but pick up on this.

Willingly sacrificing equipment to the ravages of the adventure is wise and gives the CK the perfect out to keep the character alive. This is never truer than at low levels. One blow can reap so much damage that many low-level characters cannot survive. Shift some of that damage to the equipment they carry, from swords to shields, from backpacks to staves, and the ruin the dice reap on the gear will serve to heighten the gaming experience for all involved. Not only does it bring a material cost to the characters as they must replace all that damaged gear, but it also drives home the proximity of damage and death the characters themselves face.

A note of caution in running these games. A CK should never treat it as a contest, where the number of characters killed is somehow a badge of successful game mastery. This only serves to do two things. First, it belittles the impact of the fallen character so that the threat of a character's death is expected and the player attempts every crazy fool thing that crosses their mind. They are going to die anyway, why not? Secondly, it often spoils the fun. Killing a character that is obviously playing recklessly is one thing, but killing a character because an encounter's difficulty was too high is only frustrating and rather boring. It permanently marks the CK's game as somewhat unbalanced and discourages people from playing again.

All of these concepts highlight that this is a role playing game. Descriptive text, mood, and setting all come into play. By using all these tools, the CK easily engages the characters in what can't help but be a fun evening of adventure and mayhem. Setting up a loose encounter that the CK is both able and willing to adjust allows for a fluid game that keeps the players guessing on what is going to happen next and allows the CK to ratchet up the challenges and the fun. Equipment is the most overlooked yet important aspect of low-level games and its importance cannot be overstated. Gear up properly for the contest to come and the CK is able to wear the characters down without wearing the characters out. It has the added benefit of expanding a character's abilities beyond the character skills given in the **Players Handbook**, for uses of the equipment are countless and not geared toward any one situation. Having this on hand puts the game on a far more dynamic footing than simply having a few more levels or a few more hit points.

Mid Level 4-8

Through reckless adventure and brazen heroics and no doubt a fair share of luck, the low-level characters push their way through to the mid-level range. This means that they have successfully cut their teeth on the horror and blood of the early trials. Greenhorns no longer, they now begin the second stage of the journey to immortality. Mid-level characters enjoy many benefits of their growing power: hit points, wealth in armor and gear, as well a range of NPCs to access, and experiences to fall back upon. Against this, stand increasingly powerful monsters, whose abilities range from the brute force to sorcerous weapons, new and strange. CKing mid-level characters offers the CK and the player several difficult challenges. For the CK, the act of balancing the game becomes more difficult; the use of powerful monsters offers the risk of overkill, setting the characters against monsters whose powers prove insurmountable, all the while maintaining an interesting, flavorful adventure. For the player it's learning how to pit their growing skill sets against these new threats and balance their power in growing hit points, armor class, and magic without overextending themselves and getting killed. In many respects, mid-level characters are the most enjoyable to play as they offer a host of new monsters and allow the CK to pound the characters without instantly killing them, adding time to the equation of the running adventure, which in turn allows the enterprising story teller to really come to grips with the story and its threats and bring those down on the characters like a hammer.

First and foremost, the characters possess more hit points. Where before, one or two good blows threaten a character - especially a wizard or illusionist - with a quick death, the higher hit points allow them take much more punishment. This expands the CKs story telling in two directions.

The increased hit points allow the CK to bring a greater number of smaller monsters to bear in the battle; multiple monsters offer a greater threat that equates into more excitement. Capturing a battle where the character must fight off a horde of screaming kobolds, raking, clawing, biting, stabbing at them, brings personal combat to its highest form. The swirling hordes of their enemies circle them, cutting one off from the other, attempting to drag them out into their own ranks to consume them in their own weight of numbers. Here the hero carves through a host of his opponents, hacking to the left or right just to stay alive; no longer bound by one or two spells, the wizard, cleric, druid, or illusionist taps multiple spells to keep the madness at bay. The added bonus here is that the piles of fallen foes embolden the players, encouraging them to play the fearless, almost reckless, hero in their quest to conquer and overcome their foe.

Beyond the madding crowd of orcs, kobolds, and goblins, lie a host of monsters in both **Monsters & Treasure** and **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde.** These monsters possess powers the low-level characters cannot overcome but challenge the mid-level characters. Here are new threats the players may not understand so that the challenge is far greater as they do not immediately know the proper defenses or how to fight them. There is a danger here for the CK, as pitting the characters against monsters whose powers, on the surface do not seem very difficult, often prove very difficult and dangerous. The enterprising CK must be willing and able to adjust and shift with

these moments, curtailing effects of powers, devastating rolls and the like if the situation should call for it.

This is the true challenge for CKing mid-level characters. Multiple monsters exist, as do traps and magic items. Choosing them and balancing them is difficult. It is not the goal of the CK to destroy characters. Any such CK ranking that counts character kills is counter-productive to the story and the fun of the game. Reading the monsters and understanding the effects of their powers is very important. Many CKs fall into the trap of looking at a monster's HD and setting that against the level of the players; four **6th level** characters fighting 3 eight HD monsters sound workable. But that monster's abilities are the true test of its power, for the characters must make their saving throws against that hit dice and if those saves are on average against none-primes, the chances of failure increase. If failure means death or incapacitation, then the CK may find herself facing a dead party. Balance the encounter by looking at the outcome. If characters fail multiple saves as well as the damage that monsters might deal out, the adventure will not be any fun for anyone.

Of course, this is not to say that encounters should not pose the threat of character death as that is the final motivator for fighting to survive. If the moment's danger weaves with chance or fate, and a character's poor actions fuel the flames and the character falls, then it is what it is.

The best way to achieve the balance in the encounter is to utilize the story itself. If the encounter shifts too violently toward destruction, or even falls prey to the character's insane luck, be prepared to change the encounter in midstream. This is where playing behind screens proves most useful. Adjust the monsters hit points up or down as needed. The players need never know. Adjust AC through wastage, adjust the AC by destroying shields, or change the challenge level as needed. In short, the Castle Keeper must practice institutionalized cheating in order to salvage an encounter that proves imbalanced. Experience teaches the Ce K when this is necessary and when it is not. Some encounters, starting dangerously and ending precipitously through some bold action can be as momentous as the long grueling fight that leaves scores dead and everyone wounded.

As always, one of the best tools at the CKs hand in balancing these encounters lies with the characters, literally. By shifting killing blows, breath weapons, magical attacks toward the character's war gear or traveling equipment, one can destroy the character's worldly wealth but allow them to fight on. Crushing helmets, shattered shields, breaking hafts, and notching blades bring the reality of the battle to the player's without ending it. Furthermore, the wake of devastation always echoes in the halls of memory.

The Adventure: In designing the adventure, the CK must understand the characters. It is truly a time of picking up steam, as they now possess enough hit points to survive longer than two or three heavy blows and their skills increase to the point that they begin to affect the actual story arc and direction of the game. Here, the fighter alone begins to settle into a pattern that lasts for many levels, but for the rest of the characters, more levels mean more skills. These new abilities add role playing depth to the mid-level characters and allow them to understand what is going on and in some cases to impact the events. From the bard's legend lore and the ranger's tracking to the barbarian's intimidation and beyond, the characters begin to push out from a low impact role to a higher one.

The Player: Make the player realize the abilities of their character. Learning multiple applications of their abilities is paramount for balance. The joy of **Castles & Crusades** is that one's imagination alone restricts the character's ability. "Try it" becomes the mantra of the game. Encourage the players to always think out of the box. Some abilities are linear and do not have many applications, but others might prove useful in multiple situations. An assassin might try to use his case target ability to learn something unique about an NPC, with no intention to slay them. Allow them to try anything they think of; they may fail, but they should be encouraged to try.

This becomes particularly true for spell casters. The limited number of spells they are able to cast in any given day, coupled with lower hit points, armor class, and their ability to hit, forces them back upon their spells. Thinking outside the box is not easy and in and of itself is challenging, but the character that expands the very usefulness of their spells, tremendously increases their power and ability to impact the game; this helps the CK redress balancing issues. A *message* spell designed to send a message to a friend can serve as a weapon by sending a burst of threatening sound toward an enemy.

Understanding their increased powers is as important as expanding upon their own abilities. Where before a few blows or a trap destroyed half the party, now the increased hit points, level bonus to checks and saving throws, better equipment and spells, bring the character forward in huge leaps and bounds. Now the character can take the punishment, and the player should not be shy in letting the character do so. Shying away from battle or challenges because of the threat of death does not serve the story arc or make for very fun play. Brave Sir Robin must fight and not fear the consequences to their character.

As with the low-level and any game, the best balancing tool is to remain flexible as the game unfolds. Allow more monsters into the fray, increase the CL if the character's abilities easily overcome obstacles, or conversely cut down on monsters if they prove too strong. The CK that follows a strict script quickly finds their game locked in a corner that they cannot get out of without drastic measures.

High-level

It is the high-level characters who, enabled with tremendous abilities, hit points and usually decked out in powerful magic, that begin to force the direction of the narrative, and dominate the game like never before. These characters pose an interesting problem in maintaining game balance. Players know their

characters and their abilities well. Furthermore, they know the general tenor of the game and the methods of the CK. Combined, these pose a problem for the CK as challenges become more difficult than simply heightening the amount of the HD or hit points or increasing the challenge level. Enterprising players have long learned the stylistic approaches and generally know what fails and what does not; this sixth sense serves as difficult to overcome for CKs, unless they resort to brutal, massive, overwhelming force. The skilled CK takes a more subtle approach.

Preparation is paramount in high-level games. When attempting to achieve and keep the game balance, scripting out the adventure is very important, making certain that the monsters and NPCs have all their abilities and or spells at least listed and for the CK to possess a rudimentary knowledge of how they work. Couple this knowledge with how the monster or NPC uses those abilities and spells helps even more; if they have a concerted plan in encounter/adventure, the CK should know beforehand how tough or weak they are. If too weak, it allows plenty of time to toughen the encounter without slowing the pace of the game or weakening them as needed.

This same preparation carries over into the adventure. Using weather, terrain and other natural functions to ratchet the game up or down is a time honored approach to keeping control of the game. It is often overlooked but these elements of the physical world act in many ways much as do monsters and NPCs.

Even as the players have learned how to react to the CK, the CK must surely have learned how the players generally react and how they use their character abilities. Like anyone players slip into habits, they tend to do what has worked before and shy away from those things that generally fail. Change the tune, dropping hit dice and challenge levels on monsters and traps helps to trip up the players.

A key element to the game is the CKs ability to alter or change the monsters that characters encounter. This tool comes in use when dealing with balance and high-level characters. There is every reason to believe that the high-level character has encountered many of the monsters available to the CK. The players are familiar with these monster's set abilities and able to react to them quickly and through using their own abilities to maximum advantage. Everyone knows that a troll regenerates and is destroyed only by the use of fire. By changing the nature of the monster, from something as simple as its hit dice, to something as complex as its spell use or innate abilities, the CK can challenge the party while using familiar, though refurbished tools. Now the troll does not regenerate, unless it is burned.

Monster Variance & NPCs: NPCs serve as another perfect balancing tool that can drive the game forward. NPCs are not characters. They are tools at the disposal of the CK and therefore should be treated as such. Allowing a fighter NPC to possess a tracking ability is perfectly okay in the context of the game. Some justification may be supplied but only if the CK is in a giving mood. The NPC is a tool to drive the game, not a bell-weather for mechanical governance. Familiar classes with unknown powers help the CK keep the characters guessing, reluctant to use their full bank of abilities as this may give away to the NPC who or what they are capable of. This allows the CK to script the adventure better as it unfolds. Adjusting the NPCs up or down is also very helpful.

What was expected becomes unexpected. The giant shouldn't have been killed that quickly. That spell has never been that effective before. Changing the variants on certain things is easy and well within the prerogative of the CK; their need be no justification for this. If desirous allow for more powerful, clever, creatures where before the beast was weak and stupid. This approach tends to put players on their guard, making them more ready to react to the game and what is going on. The familiar turned strange is the perfect tool in the CK's arsenal.

Magic: At high levels magic offers a whole new area that the CK can utilize to script balanced adventures and keep them there. Magic is always an unknown in the game; as with monster variance, magic items can be changed or altered to fit the CKs needs, the player and his character can never second guess what the item or items does or might actually be doing in the case of sentient items.

At this level the sentient magic item begins to play a role like never before and one, if used properly, that outshines in usefulness almost any other tool in the CK's tool box. The magic item, long desired, or one just acquired is very addictive for it gives the character powers that they did not have, and perhaps have never had before or will ever have through normal level progression. The magic item can set the tone, for it has designs of its own, and may, at the desire of the CK, struggle with the player with power over the character, whether through actual or overt. The most obvious example of any such item is the ring in Tolkien's trilogy. The ring drives the adventure, serves to attract the enemy, and influences everyone from the ancient elves to kings of men and the fellowship. In the Big Game that the Troll Lords play many such items entered the fray: the sword Durendale, the Eye of Thorax, the Blade of Railth. All these items had powers that impacted the play, distracted the characters, forced them to battle uknown enemies, etc.

There is no limit on these items, for as the game evolves so can the magic item. What the characters didn't know one day they may find out the next, as the CK had an epiphany while reading the latest Green Lantern comic book.

Shake it Up

In creating the adventure or encounter, the CK must learn to change their old habits, change things from what the characters have come to expect to something entirely new. Approach problems from a different angle and establish different criteria for success. If the game is normally combat heavy, shift it to one where role playing dominates and the solutions are only attainable through role playing. This helps to challenge the player from different angles and to use their own abilities and skills in different manners. This approach to balance works well

with the philosophy that nothing is written in stone and the CK is able to secretly change things to make them harder or easier depending on the momentary needs.

Achieving and maintaining game balance becomes easy with experience; not just experienced gaming, but experience gaming with a particular group. Knowledge and habit come to dominate and the CK able to take advantage of that assumed knowledge and those lazy habits is much better positioned to create initial balance and to maintain it when needed.

EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED

Always expect the unexpected. Be prepared for players to attempt to try almost anything, especially when the lives of their characters are on the line. **Castles & Crusades** is a game of imagination and the players should attempt most anything; their abilities and spells allow for a broad interpretation and the smart Castle Keeper embraces this, using it to their advantage. Characters that attempt anything might be able to redress balance issues, overcome problems that have no good solutions. Conversely, they may plunge the game in a direction never intended, leading players and Castle Keepers alike down a road of merry adventure of which they never before dreamed. The CK should expect the unexpected and embrace it as a tool of good and fun gaming.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE

Experience points may not be the driving thing making a game fun, but it certainly is the icing on the cake. Though the rules as set down in the **Players Handbook** are pretty broad and lay down a nice guideline for the game, there are a few tricks to granting experience points that can help a game and a few pitfalls that can hinder. How often is too little, too much?

It is understood that a character can gain experience points from monsters, money, magic items, story, and role playing. Success in any one of these fields earns a certain amount of points, sometimes this amount is a hard and fast rule, such as with magic items, but other situations are left entirely up to the discretion of the CK. Role-playing experience for example, is entirely up to the CK. So if a paladin slays an ogre and gains a magic sword, the CK knows what to give. Those points are listed in the rulebook. A great deal more experience, however, may be forthcoming from that one encounter. Perhaps the player is a robust gamer and really gets into his game. During the 15 minute contest he's so bold as to say things like "I throw up my shield to block any downward swing, and slice at his thigh with my blade hoping to cut his leg out from under him." This example of role playing may be worth a little more. Conversely, some encounters may not be worth any experience. The 14th level ranger that kills his 11265th orc probably does not need any more experience for killing yet another orc.

How much experience the CK should actually award depends on the pace of level progression you want the game to take. Level progression is a vitally important thing to any role-playing game. In some RPGs, characters gain experience too fast, level up quickly, and "finish" the game. Though this seems unrealistic to those of us who are veteran table top gamers, it is a real factor in that people buy the game, play for a while, and move on to other interests. Keeping them engaged is a vital part of making the game worthwhile to play. The level progression in C&C was tightened and deliberately set with breaks for this very reason. Of course, we opened the playing field by creating guidelines on how to award EXPs (experience points) if the players/CK desired a game with faster level progression.

The fundamental discussion lies in the economic principle of investment versus return. If the CK put so many man-hours into setting up a game, prepping for it, making characters, and coming to grips with the background only to find the characters rapidly gaining levels after a few sessions, the CK runs the risk of finishing the game. Before anyone realizes it, maybe after a year's time, the characters are at the epic level. They've done so but have still only encountered half the actual monsters in the book and seen maybe one-tenth of the magic items. Now they are too high level and fighting those monsters or using those magic items is next to pointless and certainly not fun. The other extreme is just as bad. Level advancement is so rare that the CK finds himself fighting the same monsters week after week because the characters have not gained any levels to actually take on the next HD level of monster. Magic items are so rare that the players don't have the opportunity to play them and unless the story is crazy engaging everyone finds themselves in a retirement home before they reach a level high enough to actually slay the ancient red dragon.

Both of these extremes are rare, and though they can be fun and often memorable, they do tend to highlight the pitfalls of experience points. The foremost thing the CK has to do is to decide how fast the level progression should be before the game begins. Many factors play into this. How long the sessions are going to be, how often the group can meet, what level does everyone want to settle in at (i.e. does everyone want to play low-level for a while or mid-level longer, does the group want to shy away from epic level). This should not be an arbitrary decision by the CK, but one reached at through consensus with the other players. The CK might be in the mood for a long winded 1st level dungeon masterpiece, but the players might want to be able to actually cast 3rd level spells at some point.

Example: We had tried to revive our epic level, 20-year-long game that we like to call the Big Game. We started that fellow back in the early 80's and played it consistently until my army days and then picked it back up. Their level progression was very slow. After ten years of playing, sometimes two and three times a week they had averaged 8th to 10th level. Those games were fun, lots of fun. They were played when we were all single, in high school and college, and had nothing to worry about but a nuclear holocaust. Times are different now; we have jobs, wives, and families, along with truly gigantic time sumps such as houses, cell phones, and computers. For the most part, we game every Wednesday night, but not for long. We manage to gather around 8-9 or such and play until about 12 to 12:30. So

the games at best run about five hours, more realistically three or so. We certainly don't have the time to run another 20-year epic campaign. So we discussed altering the pace of the game a bit. We decided to increase the level progression, making level in a few sessions and we would do this by making magic more readily available, but far more disposable. Once we settled on this, we quickly worked into a groove whereby the characters gained a level every three to five sessions.

Once the CK and players decide how fast the level progression is going to be, the CK can work out what he needs to do to award experience points. If it's slow, sticking with the monsters and treasure is easy enough to do. If it's fast, dropping in all the methods of gaining experience points is easy as well. But the middling progression is the hardest to settle upon. When is it too much and when is it too little? How to slow it down or pick it up when the game seems to be slipping from the progression level you've already chosen.

There is a plethora of options given to the CK for awarding experience points given in the **Players Handbook**. Don't be shy to use them all or to use some of them or to change it from time to time. The experience point methods are a tool and should be used as such. It's a given that you are going to give EXPs for monsters and magic items, but treasure, storyline, and role-playing are entirely different things.

Example: Using the option to award EXPs through the acquisition of treasure can get ridiculously out of control. Because of this our players at the noble paladin's table have decided to not award treasure point EXPs. Our paladin slays an ogre, finding 300gp in coin and gems as well as a bone relic worth 1,000gp. The decision to leave off EXPs for treasure seems a good one. The EXPs for the treasure would have been almost three times that for actually killing the ogre. However, the CK knows that the paladin is slipping behind the other party members in experience points. The player missed two sessions and lost a lot there, but paladins also need a little more than the average. Without consulting the players, the CK makes a spot decision to award for the relic. To keep the whole event in line with the game, he takes a moment to give the relic some meaning to the game. The relic is a bone from a cleric who served the paladin's deity. Pious and made a Saint by the church, the cleric's bones are holy items; though they do not confer any particular mechanical benefit, possessing one gains the paladin the full EXP value of the item, 1,000 points. Here the CK has bent the rules to fit the game, aided the paladin in catching up with his fellows, and not lost any of the context of the game.

The storyline and role-playing experience point acquisition methods can be used in similar manners. Awarding a chunk of experience points for an adventure or some amazing role-playing is a quick and dirty way to progress games forward when the level progression has slowed. They can be used as tools to slow it down as well, if the characters are gaining too much too fast, extend the period of time that the story arc covers. Having found the relic, the paladin now has to return it to a church in the city of Fiume. When this is done, the next chunk of EXPs for the story is awarded. Of course, there is no need to tell the players this. They don't particularly need to know when they are getting experience points as this can lead to other problems.

Tracking experience points after each session allows both you and the players to settle into a rhythm. This is not really a good thing. Most players are pretty smart and it's a safe bet that at least one player at the table can run decent numbers. They'll quickly figure out what they are earning EXPs for and how to earn more and worse, be able to catch you when you want to slip one player a little more or little less to keep the whole progression in line with the tone you set at the outset. Make it a standard to only award it when someone gains a level, after a certain number of sessions, or upon the conclusion of the present adventure. Tracking the exact numbers isn't necessary, as the CK should have a pretty good idea of how much they are earning and if someone is creeping toward the next level. This allows the CK to run a few games at a lower level as the EXPs have not been awarded yet. Or, on the other hand, to jump start some levels if the CK sees someone is falling behind or hasn't made much progress. Players often have no idea where their experience points are coming from, but that's because CKs pointedly avoid a formula.

Embrace arbitrary numbers. Following a strict guideline of experience point acquisition can cause contention across the table when your players realize that you may be manipulating the level progression to fit the table's needs. Sometimes adventures go very poorly, players roll horribly and mayhem ensues. Although never be opposed to hard CKing and running games where the challenge is tremendous, the CK does have to remember that the game is one for fun and four sessions of playing the paladin in which no hits are scored, nothing heroic is done and nothing is achieved, can wear on even the most thick skinned of players. It's important to make certain that the characters, if they survive, get something out of their toil. Few people show up to the table in order to wander through the squalor of life and relive the miserable conditions of lackluster homeless living in empty carts with no prospects and no hope. No one really wants to play a bum. So when things are out of whack at the table, don't hesitate to pull a few numbers out of the air and bring the planets back into orbit so the characters can get into the heroic adventure that they probably sat down at the table to play.

In truth, what does any CK gain by being stingy with EXPs? Being stingy with experience points should only be done when the game requires it, i.e. to slow down progression or when the players do something amazingly stupid. Awarding EXPs isn't rocket science and EXPs are not like gems found on the beach. They are points that track the progression and power of the characters. Award them when character's actions warrant it or when the events at the table demand it. Don't succumb to CK peer pressure and that nonsense about 'you're too soft of a CK.'

Of course, the CK is powerful and the experience points are a tool designed to forward the adventure, the game and the

fun everyone is having and able to have at the table. Abusing that power is really not a good idea. Players can quickly pick up on a CK who has no control over what he's doing behind the screens with experience points. Though some arbitrary numbers may be tossed over the screen, complete arbitrary actions are not advised. Give yourself guidelines and play around with the various methods. Push their limits and test their capabilities. Test what you are willing to do with them and don't be afraid to try to manipulate them to your own style and the needs of the players and game.

MANAGING THE PARTY

The party generally refers to the group of characters going through the adventure, but this can as easily refer to the group of players managing the characters through the adventure. It is the CK's job to manage both, keeping the game interesting enough for the players to enjoy, and the scenario coherent enough that the characters can move through it. Managing the game and the players is much the same thing, if the party works smoothly together then the game almost always follows suit.

There are many suggestions and methods to run a game table and the party of gamers surrounding it. Far too many to list here, but the following ten items have particular merit and may help the new, or even veteran Castle Keeper run a mother game. And though many veteran CKs may disagree with some of these points, remember, the object of the game is to have fun. If the CK directs the game down a path of destruction the players don't have fun but neither does the CK as hours of adventure work is lost over whether a player wanted to have a past that reflected an abusive father or not.

SUGGESTIONS FOR SMOOTH PLAY

1. Allow Their Idiosyncrasies

Players tap inspirational sources even as Castle Keepers do. Whether it's a movie, a comic book, novel, or something they've seen or experienced these sources often enter into their character development as various traits, sometimes simple, sometimes complex. These traits may from time to time not meet the CK's vision of the mood or setting; they may at times be contrary to the background they had pre-determined for the character. In these circumstances, it is generally a bad idea to toss out the players input. Attempt to integrate the material with the ongoing game or setting. Allow for different looks, equipment, perhaps a Roman look in a medieval world, and this will make for smoother play. Beginning a game with a disconsolate player is never a good idea and usually ends poorly.

2. Foster Party Cooperation

It's always a good idea to encourage the players to work together. Its not some commune approach to problem solving, but it is a matter of playability. A CK running a game with 6 players already has six people to work with; if there is a party then that group usually has one or two "voices", people who answer the questions the CK may have such as "which direction are you going?" etc. When encounters occur, whether monster or mundane, the CK has only to work with one group of people and everyone can participate because their characters are right there. If the group splits up into 3 different directions then the CK effectively has 3 groups to CK and two groups must sit idly by while the CK works with the third. If this takes a while then the CK runs the risk of boring the other four players to tears waiting for their turn.

3. Dictate No Will...Unless

Though the game often takes place in feudal environments, do not run the table as a feudal monarchy. The players are not serfs and treating them thus always ends poorly. Players respond to this in generally two ways. Often they are bored and irritated. But as often, if not more often, they become destructive and the game rapidly devolves into a slaughter fest. Adjudicate fairly and calmly. The Castle Keeper should be passive most of the time, allowing emotion only when characters achieve the impossible. Allow humor to run free and don't sweat being interrupted with a bunch of jokes; however, if it becomes too disruptive, crush it with an iron fist.

4. Possess No Steamroller

The Castle Keeper's job is to run a fun adventure for the player's characters. Forcing the characters to do things they do not want to do is never a good idea. Equally as important is forcing them onto an adventuring path. Give the characters a choice in almost all that they do; it may be a choice between one direction or death, but a choice nonetheless. Making their characters do something through spell use or some similar device only serves to irritate players and usually leads actively choosing to be destructive to the game.

5. Shut Thy Pie Hole

The Castle Keeper must learn to speak quickly and clearly and not to dominate the table. Long winded backgrounds or description do little to improve the ambience of the game as every player is particularly concerned with their own character, his background, and description. Give clear, succinct descriptions and then turn the table over to the players. This allows them to participate in the game. Furthermore, do not interrupt them with explanations of what they are doing, allow the players to explain it and role play it if necessary. Unless the timing is critical and they have only seconds to react, talking them through an encounter is only rude.

6. Call out the Caller

In larger groups of players, it's a good idea to have the players choose someone, whether officially or unofficially, as the caller. Someone who can direct information to the CK so that the CK does not miss anyone in the course of play, and so that the CK clearly understands what the party is doing. If there is mapping going on, some individual should be placed in charge of the mapping as well; their job is to scribble down notes on about the dungeon and map it out on the graph paper. Neither of these should be roles that assume any kind of control over other characters, interrupt what they say or desire to do.

7. Love Not Thy Monster

Monsters are not the CKs children. They are monsters, tools in the game designed to bring challenge and terror to the players and the characters they run. Do not become so attached to them that their death is traumatic for the CK. Their lot in life is to offer imaginary threats to imaginary characters, so allow them to be ground beneath the heel of the imaginary character.

8. Death is No Accomplishment

Killing characters does not take skill. With a plethora of monsters, traps, poisons, magic, spells, and ample imagination killing a character should be as easy as eating a piece of home made pie placed on the windowsill. What takes skill is to create a hard, challenging adventure that threatens death at every turn but gives the characters an out without them knowing it's an out. If they are working up a sweat to stay alive, and survive to spin the yarns at the next table, then the CK's job is a job well done.

9. Fear No Flex

Some adventures founder on the intractable or reflexive nature of the players and their characters because the CK is far too married to their original idea of what the adventure should be or where it should be going. Players frequently change the course of the game by deciding to do something outside the intended script. There is nothing wrong with this, even if it changes the focus of the game away from where the CK wanted it to go. Be flexible. Don't hesitate to pick up and move the entire adventure if needed. The rogues' galley in Clusterberg promises wild adventure but the characters don't go to Clusterberg, they go to Flusterberg. Pick up the galley and move it to Flusterberg. Players have little or no idea. Be flexible.

10. Combat Rules

Combat rules. It is the best weapon in the CK's arsenal and can be used to bring the table back from the brink of the wilderness. The combat can serve to end a joke session that has grown out of control, redirect an adventure that does not flex, put an end to long winded role playing sessions. Furthermore, it can serve a CK as a respite in the middle of a turbulent game, allowing them to get a handle on what is unfolding. The combat need not be deadly, even small battles are enough to re-shift the focus of the game. Combat is the must useful tool the CK has.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Many Castle Keepers enjoy using tools such as miniatures, models, and/or battle maps. These can be very handy and often serve as better representations of the characters than a stack of dice. Miniatures serve as a great method to convey the mood and the tenor of battle. Many gamers, with visual acuity, enjoy seeing the maelstrom of the miniatures moving to and fro about the table. Add to these battle maps or game tiles put out by such companies as **Fat Dragon Games**, and the miniatures actually serve the game in making game play even smoother. Area of affect, movement, range, and a host of other mechanics prove easy to track on gridded maps. Furthermore, tracking time is a valuable asset for the Castle Keeper.

Miniatures & Maps

Miniatures come in a many shapes and sizes. The standard size is 25mm, sized to scale for monsters and characters both. There are many companies that manufacture miniatures, most notable being **Reaper Miniatures** and **Dark Sword Miniatures.** Though they can be expensive and painting them can be a time consuming process, bringing them to the table adds a great deal of visual effects to the table top game. Many of the miniatures now come pre-painted as well. Players should be encouraged to pick out miniatures for their characters and the CK should set to looking at buying miniatures for the monsters. Painted or not, they are a great addition to the game.

Maps & Models

Many choices exist for adding maps and models to the game. These serve the CK wonderfully, allowing them to better track distance and affect the movement of monsters, and the general layout of an encounter. **Fat Dragon Games** produces a plethora of full colored models that, though they may require some assembly, prove perfect additions to the game.

Time and & Food

An unsung tool, but too often necessary, are the usage tables. These tables help the CK and player track items from the mundane to the fantastic. These include, but are not limited to: time, food, water; missiles, and magic charges. The following Tables should prove useful to the Castle Keeper.

TABLE 14.1 TIME

YEAR

MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH	MONTH
1 ☐	1 ☐	1 ☐	1 ☐	1 ☐	1 ☐	1 ☐	1 ☐	1 ☐	1 ☐	1 ☐	1 ☐
2 ☐	2 ☐	2 ☐	2 ☐	2 ☐	2 ☐	2 ☐	2 ☐	2 ☐	2 ☐	2 ☐	2 ☐
3 ☐	3 ☐	3 ☐	3 ☐	3 ☐	3 ☐	3 ☐	3 ☐	3 ☐	3 ☐	3 ☐	3 ☐
4 ☐	4 ☐	4 ☐	4 ☐	4 ☐	4 ☐	4 ☐	4 ☐	4 ☐	4 ☐	4 ☐	4 ☐
5 ☐	5 ☐	5 ☐	5 ☐	5 ☐	5 ☐	5 ☐	5 ☐	5 ☐	5 ☐	5 ☐	5 ☐
6 ☐	6 ☐	6 ☐	6 ☐	6 ☐	6 ☐	6 ☐	6 ☐	6 ☐	6 ☐	6 ☐	6 ☐
7 ☐	7 ☐	7 ☐	7 ☐	7 ☐	7 ☐	7 ☐	7 ☐	7 ☐	7 ☐	7 ☐	7 ☐
8 ☐	8 ☐	8 ☐	8 ☐	8 ☐	8 ☐	8 ☐	8 ☐	8 ☐	8 ☐	8 ☐	8 ☐
9 ☐	9 ☐	9 ☐	9 ☐	9 ☐	9 ☐	9 ☐	9 ☐	9 ☐	9 ☐	9 ☐	9 ☐
10 ☐	10 ☐	10 ☐	10 ☐	10 ☐	10 ☐	10 ☐	10 ☐	10 ☐	10 ☐	10 ☐	10 ☐
11 ☐	11 ☐	11 ☐	11 ☐	11 ☐	11 ☐	11 ☐	11 ☐	11 ☐	11 ☐	11 ☐	11 ☐
12 ☐	12 ☐	12 ☐	12 ☐	12 ☐	12 ☐	12 ☐	12 ☐	12 ☐	12 ☐	12 ☐	12 ☐
13 ☐	13 ☐	13 ☐	13 ☐	13 ☐	13 ☐	13 ☐	13 ☐	13 ☐	13 ☐	13 ☐	13 ☐
14 ☐	14 ☐	14 ☐	14 ☐	14 ☐	14 ☐	14 ☐	14 ☐	14 ☐	14 ☐	14 ☐	14 ☐
15 ☐	15 ☐	15 ☐	15 ☐	15 ☐	15 ☐	15 ☐	15 ☐	15 ☐	15 ☐	15 ☐	15 ☐
16 ☐	16 ☐	16 ☐	16 ☐	16 ☐	16 ☐	16 ☐	16 ☐	16 ☐	16 ☐	16 ☐	16 ☐
17 ☐	17 ☐	17 ☐	17 ☐	17 ☐	17 ☐	17 ☐	17 ☐	17 ☐	17 ☐	17 ☐	17 ☐
18 ☐	18 ☐	18 ☐	18 ☐	18 ☐	18 ☐	18 ☐	18 ☐	18 ☐	18 ☐	18 ☐	18 ☐
19 ☐	19 ☐	19 ☐	19 ☐	19 ☐	19 ☐	19 ☐	19 ☐	19 ☐	19 ☐	19 ☐	19 ☐
20 ☐	20 ☐	20 ☐	20 ☐	20 ☐	20 ☐	20 ☐	20 ☐	20 ☐	20 ☐	20 ☐	20 ☐
21 ☐	21 ☐	21 ☐	21 ☐	21 ☐	21 ☐	21 ☐	21 ☐	21 ☐	21 ☐	21 ☐	21 ☐
22 ☐	22 ☐	22 ☐	22 ☐	22 ☐	22 ☐	22 ☐	22 ☐	22 ☐	22 ☐	22 ☐	22 ☐
23 ☐	23 ☐	23 ☐	23 ☐	23 ☐	23 ☐	23 ☐	23 ☐	23 ☐	23 ☐	23 ☐	23 ☐
24 ☐	24 ☐	24 ☐	24 ☐	24 ☐	24 ☐	24 ☐	24 ☐	24 ☐	24 ☐	24 ☐	24 ☐
25 ☐	25 ☐	25 ☐	25 ☐	25 ☐	25 ☐	25 ☐	25 ☐	25 ☐	25 ☐	25 ☐	25 ☐
26 ☐	26 ☐	26 ☐	26 ☐	26 ☐	26 ☐	26 ☐	26 ☐	26 ☐	26 ☐	26 ☐	26 ☐
27 ☐	27 ☐	27 ☐	27 ☐	27 ☐	27 ☐	27 ☐	27 ☐	27 ☐	27 ☐	27 ☐	27 ☐
28 ☐	28 ☐	28 ☐	28 ☐	28 ☐	28 ☐	28 ☐	28 ☐	28 ☐	28 ☐	28 ☐	28 ☐
29 ☐	29 ☐	29 ☐	29 ☐	29 ☐	29 ☐	29 ☐	29 ☐	29 ☐	29 ☐	29 ☐	29 ☐
30 ☐	30 ☐	30 ☐	30 ☐	30 ☐	30 ☐	30 ☐	30 ☐	30 ☐	30 ☐	30 ☐	30 ☐
31 ☐	31 ☐	31 ☐	31 ☐	31 ☐	31 ☐	31 ☐	31 ☐	31 ☐	31 ☐	31 ☐	31 ☐

TABLE 14.2 CONSUMABLES

Item	Amount
_____	☐☐☐

CHAPTER 15 – THE SIEGE ENGINE

The SIEGE Engine underlies the rules for **Castles & Crusades**. This basic mechanic resolves almost all conflicts of action in **C&C**. A fairly thorough discussion of when and how to use the SIEGE Engine is provided in the **Players Handbook**. However, the engine is very versatile, and creative Castle Keepers can adjust it to better fit their games. In order to adjust the SIEGE Engine's base numbers, a CK should have a very clear understanding of what the SIEGE Engine is, how it works, and the implications of adjusting the base mechanic's numbers.

Before continuing forward, the Castle Keeper must understand that changing the basic premise of the SIEGE Engine can massively impact game play and make any game an unbalanced, unplayable mess. Excessively high attribute scores, combat modifiers, magic items, powerful spells, for example, can all unhinge a game quickly; adjusting the SIEGE Engine may have this same effect. Changing a rules system is not easy, as the entire game is based upon that system, and the whole game may need adjusting if it is changed. What follows is a discussion of the Engine itself and how to modify the basic SIEGE Engine mechanic, rather than change it. In this instance, before designing or introducing a modification, test it in game play at various character levels to try to understand its impact.

THE SIEGE ENGINE

When an action is taken for which the Castle Keeper deems a significant chance of failure exists, an attribute check is made. The player rolls a d20 and adds his character's level (at the Castle Keeper's discretion) to the roll, as well as any attribute bonus. The player must inform the Castle Keeper whether or not the attribute is a primary attribute or a secondary attribute. The best way to do this is for the player to state the die result, followed by either the words "prime" or "secondary."

Example: Josh's character Johann has just attempted to pick the pocket of a merchant. Johann is a 3rd-level rogue with a 14 dexterity, with dexterity a prime attribute. Picking pockets requires a dexterity check and the CK now asks Josh for one.

CK: "Josh, your rogue has reached his grimy little hand into the merchant's broad coat and feels a silk purse. Please roll for a pick pocket check."

Josh: "Johann silently prays for success and attempts to pull the purse out of the merchant's pocket. I rolled a 14, prime."

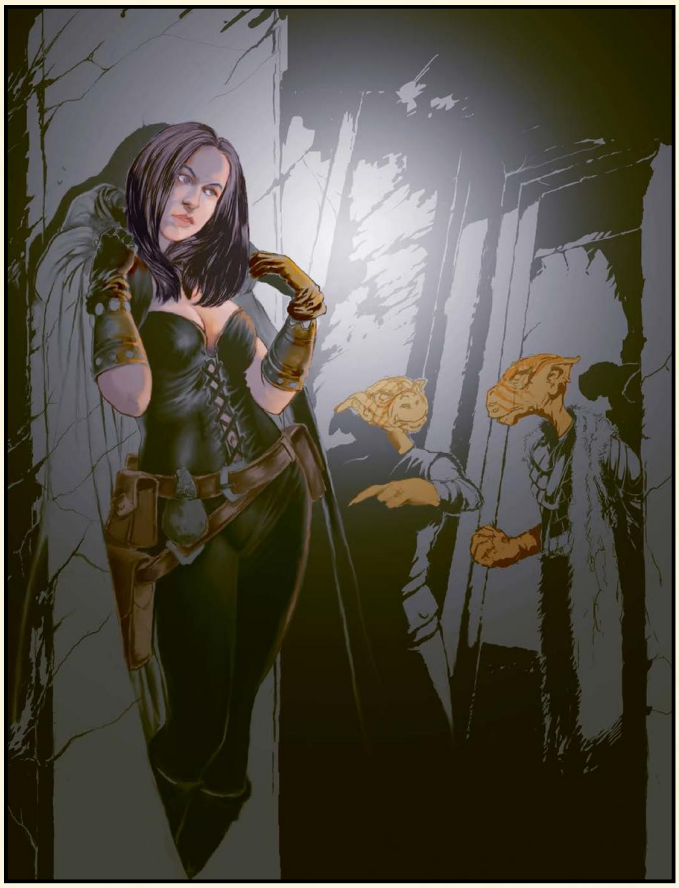
The chance for an action's success or failure is affected by whether the controlling attribute is designated as primary or secondary, as the challenge base will be different depending on the designation. Primary attributes have a challenge base of 12, thus checks succeed on a die roll of 12 or greater. Secondary attributes have a challenge base of 18, thus checks succeed on a die roll of 18 or greater.The challenge base is adjusted by the challenge level of any conflict. The CK determines a check's challenge level. The check's challenge level should equal the HD or level of the encounter and any other variants the CK deems necessary. The challenge level + the challenge base = the challenge class. This is the final number the character's die roll needs to equal or beat to succeed at a task.

The player's die roll is adjusted by whatever circumstances the Castle Keeper deems necessary and judicious. In our above example, the Castle Keeper does not feel any adjustment is necessary, as the merchant is not paying attention and it's a crowded barroom with people crowded together in the room.

Example: In the previous example, Johann needs a 12 to succeed, and he rolls a 15. Even without taking into account the addition of his rogue level (+3) or his attribute modifier (+1), the CK knows Johann has rolled enough for success.

Castle Keeper: "Johann deftly slips the purse out of the victim's interior vest's pocket and walks away with only a sideways glance from the merchant."

On the other hand, the Castle Keeper could rule differently. Assume for a moment the person Johann is attempting to pick pocket is a **6th level** rogue disguised as a merchant. The rogue merchant's level is equal to the challenge level the character must overcome. Therefore, the Castle Keeper adds 6 to the task's challenge base. Since the challenge base is still 12, adding the challenge level of 6 to the task makes the challenge class 18. Johann rolls of 14, adds his level and dexterity modifier (+4 total) for a final roll of 17, which indicates failure.



Example: Castle Keeper: "The merchant's hand swiftly catches Johann's at the wrist, and he looks Johann in the eye with a baleful glare."

This is the SIEGE Engine at work, and it is very simple. By examining the rules however, we can add additional complexity to the system. Keep in mind the basic rule: the challenge base (CB) plus the challenge level (CL) equals the challenge class (CC). The challenge class (CC) is the number the player's character has to beat on a d20 roll in order for an action to succeed.

CHALLENGE BASE

The challenge base is always one of two numbers It is either a 12 or an 18. It is 12 if the attribute being checked against is a primary attribute. It is an 18 if the attribute being checked against is a secondary attribute.

CHALLENGE LEVEL

The challenge level is the level of difficulty the Castle Keeper assigns to the action. Assigning a value to the challenge class is, in theory, an easy task. Task difficulty can be assigned any value the CK desires. Tasks easier than a 0 may also arise in game play (picking the pocket of a passed-out drunk, for example) such that the CK may assign a negative value to the task.

CHALLENGE CLASS

The concepts and the details relating to the CL are discussed in greater detail in another section. What is important to know here is the very basic idea behind the system and how it is mechanically applied in order to better understand how the rules work and can be modified.

The challenge class is determined by adding the challenge base and the challenge level together. The player must equal or exceed this this score on the roll of a d20 in order for that action to be successful. In the first example, Johann has dexterity as a prime, so the task has a CB of 12. The CK assigned a CL of 0 to the encounter, meaning Josh, Johann's player, needed to roll 12 or better for the task to be successful. In the second example, the CB remained the same, but the CK added a CL of 6 as the person being pickpocketed was a **6th level** rogue. Thus Josh would have to roll 18 or better for the task to be successful.

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ATTRIBUTES

As has been mentioned, the SIEGE Engine is the basic mechanic driving C&C. The primary and secondary attribute concept drives the SIEGE Engine. All attributes are assigned a primary or secondary designation. The designation of an attribute as either primary or secondary determines the challenge base for any type of attribute check. Almost all of the game's mechanics are resolved through the use of attribute checks.

To repeat, for all attribute checks affected by a primary attribute, the CB is 12. For all attribute checks affected by a secondary attribute, the CB is 18. Actions performed with primary attributes are far more likely to succeed than those performed with secondary attributes.

One should note that, all things being equal, a 1st level character, when performing an action with a primary attribute, has a 45% chance of successfully doing so. This is without adding the level bonus, which is almost always the case. A 1st level character, when performing an action with a secondary attribute, has a 15% chance for success.

TABLE 15.1 SIEGE ENGINE EXPRESSED AS A %

Chance of success for 1st level characters		
Primary	45%	CB 12
Secondary	15%	CB 18

The chance of successfully performing that action increases by 5% per level. The primary/secondary attribute system simply creates a system whereby chances for successfully performing actions are based upon the attributes themselves and how they are designated.

Each race receives a certain number of primary attributes and is allowed to designate which attributes are primary and secondary. Humans are allowed three primary attributes, and demi-humans are allowed two primary attributes. One of the character's primary attributes will be always be decided for the character as it is based upon the character's chosen class. Monsters have assigned attributes, either mental or physical.

ATTRIBUTES CHECKS IN THE META-GAME

In game play, it is important to note whether the attribute being checked against is primary or secondary. The Castle Keeper could ask the player the attribute's designation each time a roll is necessary but, it would be easier if the player simply told the Castle Keeper this information when providing the CK with his die roll's results. In the example above, the player Josh would reply: "Johann silently prays for success and attempts to pull the purse out of the merchant's vest pocket. *I rolled a 14, prime."*

Josh has told the Castle Keeper the attribute's designation. This makes it easier and quicker for the Castle Keeper to figure out the CC for the check. This few seconds of work can avoid potential mistakes, needless questions, corrections, etc. For ease of game play, the player must always be sure to let the Castle Keeper know whether a check is for a prime attribute or not. CKs should never assume the attribute's designation, even though some may be obvious based on the character's class.

VARIANT CHECK METHODS

An 18/+6 Rule

This rule is a quick method of letting the Castle Keeper know the result of a roll without having to state the attribute's primary/secondary designation. In this manner, the challenge base is always 18, no matter if the check is against a primary attribute

or secondary attribute. It is the character's responsibility to add a +6 to his die result *if and only if* the attribute being checked against is a primary attribute.

By using this method, all the percentages remain the same, but the onus of managing the check falls upon the player, relieving the CK of a small amount of mathematical manipulation.

In this case, the Castle Keeper always uses 18 as the challenge base from which modifiers are adder or subtracted to, and the player and or monster adds a +6 to his character's die roll for a primary attribute.

A 20/+8/+2 Rule

Another option, similar to the above mentioned rule, is to use 20 as the challenge base. In this instance, the players add +8 to any attribute check involving a primary attribute, and they add a +2 for checks made against their secondary attribute. The Castle Keeper calculates the CC off the number 20. This is an easy number to add and subtract from, so inclined CKs should use this method.

The 15/+3/-3 Rule

Another way of looking at the rule is to choose 15 as the challenge base and add a +3 whenever a prime is used on an attribute check and a -3 when a secondary attribute is used. This method keeps a simple, single number to manipulate for the Castle Keeper, and it distinguishes the attribute designation by a positive modifier for primary attributes and negative modifier for secondary attributes.

All the results of the suggested systems are the same, but are simply ways of expressing the same rule. Choose the one you find most intuitive and easiest to manipulate.

UNDERSTANDING ATTRIBUTES

The first aspect of the rules to consider is the baseline chance for success on an action a character undertakes. When performing an easy, class-based action, what percentage chance would a 1st level character need for success?

For example, when a 1st-level ranger with no attribute bonus tracks another human through a forest, what chance would you deem that ranger has for successfully doing so? The person or creature being tracked is not a woodsman type and has no idea how to hide his tracks. The SIEGE Engine assumes a 50% chance for success as the baseline. Having the basic rules concept in place, all we need to do is generate a number which the ranger would roll against.

With the basic rule in hand (the SIEGE Engine), we needed to refine the process. With a +1 level bonus, the ranger would need to roll an 11 or better to have a 50% chance of success. Eleven? Well, 11 +1 (level bonus) =12. Thus 12 would be the baseline for success. Thus a 12 was selected for the primary attribute.

The SIEGE Engine applies the same method to a secondary attribute check. That is, an attribute check for an action which the character is not specialized in. Two factors came into play on this. The game was, in many ways, built with multiples of six in mind. There were six races, six classes, and most importantly, six attributes with scores ranging from 3-18. Six was an important design number. The selection of 18 was, in part then, arbitrarily based upon the concept of multiples of six. Another consideration was given to the chance of success for performing a secondary-attribute action. It seemed 20% was reasonable. Though some consider it a harsh ruling, ultimately the designers adopted 18 for the SIEGE Engine for reasons described below.

Let's consider all of the attributes with their own challenge base for success. There are six attributes. The SIEGE Engine assumes each character class in the game has its own area of excellence, and from there their skill capabilities go downhill. So, for example, a rogue's best attribute is his dexterity. The rogue's next best attribute is intelligence, then strength, and then wisdom, etc. For this discussion, the order does not matter. The significant concept is that a character class is best at one attribute, worst at another, and all the other attributes range in between. With that in mind, a character could designate each attribute as primary, secondary, tertiary, etc.

In fact, that is what happened when the SIEGE Engine first evolved the rules for challenge base. It produced the following chart, with the challenge base for success listed alongside its percentage chance for success.

TABLE 15.2 ATTRIBUTES & CHALLENGE BASE (EARLY EVOLUTION)

Attribute	Challenge Base	Chance of success
1 (primary)	10	60%
2 (secondary)	12	50%
3 etc	14	40%
4 etc	16	30%
5 etc	18	20%
6 etc	20	10%

As you can see from the chart, the early SIEGE Engine rules had a little more complexity built into their basic mechanic. This complex design evolved into a much more simplistic mechanic when the challenge bases were narrowed down to two standard numbers. Choosing 12/18 as the basic challenge base for success just made sense, and with only two numbers for the players and the Castle Keeper to manipulate during game play, it made play quicker and involved much less paperwork than dealing with six different challenge bases.

Even so, this book is designed to give the CK the tools needed to tear apart the game and rebuild it using the basic mechanics and their underlying assumptions. For the Castle Keeper and players so inclined, the basic concept of the SIEGE Engine is presented and includes a few options for you to examine. When perusing the options, be aware that they are also didactic in that the

options explore the nature and application of the mechanic. By understanding each of the options and their general application, the CK cannot help but come to appreciate and understand the elegant simplicity of the rules.

In manipulating the challenge base for attribute checks, one must always bear in mind the chances for success said actions will have at "x" level. A d20 is used to manage an attribute check, and a straight 5% increase in success occurs on each lowering of the challenge base. So for example, if one were to lower the challenge base for success on a primary attribute to 10, that action has a 60% chance for success. One could lower the target number to 11, generating a 55% chance for success, or even raise it to 13, for 45% chance for success. As you can see from this discussion, lowering or raising the target number even by 1 or 2 points has a dramatic impact on game play. Keep that in mind when making adjustments to the SIEGE Engine.

Furthermore, when changing the numbers for success, consider the attribute-generation system and realize that characters often have attribute bonuses which affect the overall percentage of success. The greater the average attribute bonus, the greater the chance for success to occur. The cumulative effect of changing all the numbers can be staggering, quickly creating massively powerful characters if challenge bases are lowered, or making characters massively weaker if the challenge bases are raised.

For example, if your average fighter has a +1 bonus on strength, he automatically has a 55% chance of success on any strength attribute check. If the average attribute bonus is +2 and the target number is lowered by even one point (to 11), a character's chance of success quickly increases to 65%.

The real problem arises as the character advances in level. Remember, with only a few exceptions (detailed later in this chapter), the level is added to the attribute check. So. **5th level** characters have an 80% and 90% chance of succeeding that attribute check. By **7th level**, they are at 90% and 100% respectively. And **7th level** is not even considered a heroic level. Yet, by adjusting the challenge base numbers, the CK has quickly altered the game.

In standard **C&C**, the heroic levels are **10th-12th level**, with **12th level** being a very powerful character. At that point, even moderately difficult actions are very easy for the character to perform. By altering this basic design (which is built into the game in its entirety), CKs will affect game play. It can become more difficult to challenge players mechanically if the CK alters the system too much.

Tertiary Attributes

Castles & Crusades is designed with only a primary and secondary attribute system; however, it is possible to add tertiary attributes to the mix without unduly affecting game play. The most important aspect to consider with regards to a tertiary attribute is what value it will have as it relates to the primary and secondary attribute system. Essentially, if one has three differing levels of success when making attribute checks, what percentage should each of the associated attributes have for success at **1st level?**

If you choose to assign tertiary attributes, another consideration comes into play. You have to decide on the number of attributes to allow humans and demi-humans to slot as primary and secondary. The basic design premise for the primary/secondary attribute system is that humans can learn faster and better than demi-humans. Thus, they have three primary attributes, while the demi-humans possess two primary attributes.

If you instead decide to give humans an equal number of primary attributes as demi-humans, then you have detracted from anyone wanting to play a human, as this is the only advantage humans have as a race. They receive no other racial bonuses or special abilities.

As such, it is suggested that humans always receive more primary attributes than demi-humans.

Table 15.3 Tertiary Attributes offers a standard suggestion for developing the tertiary attribute system.

TABLE 15.3 TERTIARY ATTRIBUTES

Race	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Human	3	2	1
Demi-Human	2	2	2

All things considered, the Castle Keeper and players should make the ultimate decision on attributes for their game. For example, if the game universe is not human-centric but dwarf-centric, one could give dwarves the greater number of primary attributes. Also, one can arrange the tertiary and secondary attributes as desired among the races to give them more flavor. Just bear in mind the impact on the game any attribute arrangement may have.

Method One: The choice is, of course, left up to the Castle Keeper and players. One can choose a 50%/35%/20% for challenge base 12/15/18. This is generally considered the most logical approach, and by using this method, one does not alter the game's power structure significantly, though there is an incremental increase in the characters' chances for success.

Method Two: Another option is a 60%/40%/20% for challenge base 10/14/18. This method increases the chances for success significantly at the upper end (with primary attributes), but maintains the same chance for success at the lower end of the spectrum. The effects on game play are noted at lower levels, but they tend to be suppressed at the higher levels.

Method Three: Another method places the challenge bases at 12/18/24, for a 50%/20%/0% of success. This latter method is used in conjunction with another rule. This method allows for a character to attempt class skills of another class, but always as a tertiary attribute check, meaning the character's level is never added to the roll. This option is only useful if this rule is in play.

What happens is that a fighter can mechanically attempt to pick a pocket, but he cannot succeed unless there are mitigating circumstances allowing for his success. A rogue can attempt to track someone, but without mitigating circumstances, he will not be able to succeed. This latter system allows for some interesting variation in play while maintaining the integrity of the **Castles & Crusades** design premise.

Example: A rogue may be following a target through a snowy field. The tracks left in the snow are plain enough for anyone to see. The rogue could possible follow them, but would have no chance of catching a switch back, or determining which set of tracks is the target's among multiple sets appearing on the path.

One Other Thing

As can be seen from the three methods described above, there is quite a variation in which the attribute check system can be retooled. It is up to CKs to design the variation for their game. And this is just with three different attribute levels.

Let's assume the CK really wants to crunch the system and use all six attributes, giving each a designated bonus. The CK could use the system described at the beginning of this section, **Table 15.2 Attributes & Challenge Base.**

Or you could manipulate the numbers any way you chose and assign them to humans and demi-humans in interesting and delightful manners. You could stretch the challenge base to 24 or higher, or bring them down lower. This would give each character an entirely different feel. And if you were to combine this with a skill system, you would have a highly complex game with multiple variables and many options for the characters.

Note: As designers, be wary. **Castles & Crusades** is designed with a simple core mechanic to allow for quick adjudication of actions in a game, so the rules never overshadow the role-playing aspect, the real action of game play. If one cares to, one can add layer upon layer upon layer of rules. These rules should never essentially alter the basic mechanic, but they can alter the play of the game. The more rules added to the game, the more the dice rolling overshadows the game's role-playing aspect. If you intend on moving in this direction, be sure this is the direction you want to go.

That being said, many people, especially long-time gamers, love to manipulate and design their own rules. The basic action resolution system for **C&Cs** is easy to manipulate, allowing CKs to add to or subtract from it, creating high levels of complexity or even lower levels of complexity - whichever is desired.

Note: Regarding the creation of a prime/non-prime attribute designation, it is advisable to use multiples of six when doing so simply for ease of reference and keeping a clean slate of numbers with which to manipulate. Though the math can work easily in several directions, keeping simple principles moving forward always works the best.

Game Application

Changing the rules changes the nature of the game, and creating a more weighty mechanic requires more thought and time; allowing the mechanic to hit harder or faster does the same.

Epic Fantasy: Method Two is the best method for a high-fantasy campaign. The characters are supposed to be able to accomplish a lot more than the average person and overcome obstacles easier. The characters are supposed to be more heroic from the very beginning. This method increases the character's power but not so much as to throw an entire campaign off balance.

Classic Fantasy: If one were to use one of the above methods. Method One would be the best choice. This method does not alter the effect of game play that much, but it allows for variability and more individualization of the character.

Low Fantasy: Method Three works best in low-fantasy settings. This method broadens character choice, but makes some actions, though conceivable, very difficult to accomplish. In this method, things are just more difficult, and the likelihood of failure is greater. This difficulty adds to the game's grittiness.

IN SUM

Castles & Crusades is designed around a simple action adjudication rule. When a character takes an action for which there is a significant chance of failure or its success/failure, that action plays a part in the story-telling aspect of the game, and an attribute check resolves the action.

In short, the SIEGE Engine defines the outcome, and the mechanic determines it. This is summarized with the simple concept of the character rolling against a challenge base to succeed at a task. In the standard method, the attribute's designation determines the challenge base, and the Castle Keeper designates the challenge level, resulting in a final challenge class. The character's d20-roll result is then adjusted by the character's attribute modifier and level. In the alternate system, the CK determines the challenge base and any CL modifiers, and the character adjusts his d20 roll with his level, attribute modifier, and by +6 if the attribute is a primary one (+0 if secondary).

The Castle Keeper and players can adjust all the aforementioned aspects of the game. The attribute system can be adjusted, the attribute modifier can be adjusted, and the challenge base, vis-a-vis the designation of the attributes' character, can be adjusted.

All the systems can be manipulated. All the checks work on the same principle. One can add variety and complexity without creating subsystem rules. It simply comes down to the number of options you want to create and the amount of numbers you want to crunch. Sticking with the system as developed and using the challenge level to adjust the outcome behind the screen is, however, really the best approach.

USING ATTRIBUTE CHECKS

This section assumes the reader is familiar with the **Players Handbook's** description of attributes and their uses in the game and has familiarized himself or herself with how to use the attribute check system.

A warrior is chasing a wizard up a flight of steps. They have been dueling in a chamber below, and the wizard, near death and pressed for his life, is trying to escape. The warrior, the last of his party capable of catching and killing the evil wizard, gives chase. Up the winding staircase they go.

This situation is a classic example of a situation requiring an attribute check. Should an attribute check take place for both the fighter and wizard, or for just one of them? At what point should the check occur? Many questions arise that need addressing. This situation is one of those classic role-playing-meets-mechanics moments, where one has to out-rule the other.

In general, when there is no chance for failure in taking an action, or when the action's success or failure has little or no impact on the game, an attribute check is not required. Characters will go up and down stairs hundreds, if not thousands, of times in their adventuring career. They will stumble occasionally, of course. They may even fall. But for the most part, who cares? It never comes up in play or has any impact on it.

Yet, in the situation above, the character is running up a flight of steps chasing a villain. Is there a chance the character would stumble? Is it significant? Most importantly, will failure change the play of the game or affect the outcome of an event?

Intuitively, many Castle Keepers would avoid having the warrior or the wizard roll an attribute check to see if they make it up the stairs without falling or tripping. Only upon second thought will they muse upon the chance and perhaps give it a whirl, having both make an attribute check.

However, the CK should consider the action within an even broader context, the story-telling context of the game and the moment in play. This action would only require the characters to make attribute checks in this situation *if* this stair-chasing scene was not a culminating moment in the night's game. If the latter were the case and the whole game had been building to a moment such as this, the SIEGE Engine would not require the moment's drama be sullied by a simple trip. It would allow the wizard to get to the towers top and turn to face the panting warrior. This makes for a good story. Tripping on the stair, though realistic and maybe even probable, only detracts from the fun and heroic aspect of the game.

On the other hand, if this were one of those moments in which the drama was not king and the action's failure or success would add to the storyline, then the SIEGE Engine would allow for the check. Failure might allow the wizard to escape, add a comical moment, or cause the character to give up the chase. Any number of things could happen. It would all depend upon the context of the game the CK is running.

In other situations, the context plays no part, or by the rules, cannot. A ranger tracking an orc though can either successfully track the orc or not. Because the ranger has a specific skill enabling him to do this, when he tracks, a die roll is necessary. That attribute check is adjusted, of course; but the check must go on, and the ranger may actually fail to track the orc.

Consider another situation, though. A fresh foot of snow is on the ground and a rogue is running across an open savannah. The rogue leaves behind such an obvious trail a blind man could follow it. Throw in a light snow, wind, and some time, and those tracks could disappear, causing problems for even the most seasoned tracker.

Situation is everything. The Castle Keeper is the ultimate adjudicator of when an attribute check is necessary and for what reason. A lot of responsibility falls upon the Castle Keeper, and players should bear in mind the Castle Keeper is trying to manage a lot more than just a simple attribute check. The CK is trying to manage a story's development in a fluid environment and dealing with multiple variables for multiple players and in multiple encounters.

For the Castle Keeper, keep in mind that telling the story is paramount to struggling over whether something is realistic or not. Role-playing and story development keep players interested in the game. Rarely do mechanical situations and resolutions produce dramatic moments (though it happens). The CK, as the orchestrator of events, is responsible for ensuring the characters are enjoying the game and it is living up to their expectations.

To summarize a basic premise on the use of attribute checks for non-class-based actions, an attribute check should only be required when an action or moment of conflict resolution occurs which has a dramatic effect on game play, either in its success or failure (class-based actions, such as picking pockets, always require a check). Using the attribute check as a tool to propel the game forward is the key to understanding its application.

There is no amount of rules and examples that can teach a Castle Keeper when to use attribute checks and when to avoid them. Time and experience generally teach the CK the proper moments for such checks, and even then, Castle Keepers often over-use or under-use them. Use also depends upon the players and the style of game played. Some players prefer games with quite a bit of mechanical resolution, while others prefer games with less mechanical resolution.

Castles & Crusades is a game with few mechanical resolutions.

That said, mechanics can produce highly dramatic and exciting moments that live in players' memories for a long time. Consider the following example.

EXAMPLE: The rogue and his friend, a fighter, are chasing a miscreant across a roof. The rogue is on the spine of the slate roof in the rain; the CK requires a dexterity check. The rogue rolls low and stumbles, starting to slide down the roof, grabbing slate as he goes. His compatriot starts to throw a rope in his

direction, but fails his dexterity check, so he is not fast enough to help the rogue. The CK allows the rogue to roll another dexterity check to see if he can grab onto the roof. He just makes his rolls, and he manages to grab the gutter by one hand. The rogue is now dangling 100 feet above the ground, while slate from the roof falls around him, clattering and shattering on the cobblestones below. The fighter throws the rope again, and with a successful dexterity check, the rope lands near the rogue. The CK checks for the gutter to see if it gives way under the rogue's bulk by consulting the equipment wastage tables. Refering to **Table 9.3 Weathering & Combat Conditions Wastage,** cross referencing ceremics with falling damage the break is automatic. The gutter collapse, causing the rogue to start falling again. But the rope is at hand, so the rogue makes a grab for it. He makes another dexterity check, and this time experiences a smashing success. The rogue grabs the rope and swings clear of the broken gutter. However, the halfling fighter holding the rope must make a strength check to keep the rope in hand and the rogue from falling. The rogue weighs 150 lbs. and has about 50 lbs. of equipment on him; the halfling fighter holding the rope has a 9 strength and fails his check. The rope yanks free of his hands, and the rogue falls 100 feet to ground, sustaining massive and all-too-fatal damage.

All mechanics and some dice rolling created a wildly exciting role-playing moment.

Yet, this example highlighted the problem of understanding when to have characters make an attribute check. It is important, therefore, for this chapter to provide more in-depth rules detail than presented in the **Castles & Crusades Players Handbook** for applying the attribute checks.

Generally, unless specifically stated in the ability's description, all class abilities require an attribute check to perform those actions successfully. However, sometimes even abilities do not necessarily need a check, even though the rules call for it. One does not have to successfully roll a listen check when eavesdropping on a couple screaming at each other at a nearby table in a bar. Use common sense when having a character roll an attribute check.

Only situations in which there is a significant chance of success or failure in the game need be rolled for. A character may stumble and trip going up the stairs in a tavern, but it does not matter. In the chase situation described above, it may matter, and in a situation where the stairs are covered in oil and a creature is clambering up after them it matters. It has to matter to require a check, and only the CK can determine when one is necessary.

Additionally, the attribute check should be used to propel the game forward, either for good or ill. In the rogue example described above, the attribute checks drove the game forward, even to the point of the character's death. If the fall from the roof would not have mattered, the Castle Keeper would not have required a check. It would have been entirely unnecessary. However, the check being a fateful one, it was necessary for the CK to require the player to make a check and the dice determine the outcome.

Who Rolls?

It is the standard rule of thumb that the player makes all his character's attribute checks. However, there are times that this may cause problems in the game. For instance, the character attempting to convince a malcontent of something makes a charisma check. It might be important to the game's flow that the character not know whether his check was successful or not. In this instance, and in almost any other instance, the player should make the roll, but the CK does not have to reveal the results of the roll, or the CK can just flat our lie to the player, revealing the actual results later in game play as they come to bear on the player. The Castle Keeper and player can role-play through them.

However, lying to the players about a roll's results can cause some grief, as they may feel the CK betrayed them when they learn the truth of the matter.

An easy solution to all of this is to allow the characters to make and record several checks for attributes and keep them behind the screen. Use them, in order, as needed per each circumstance calling for the character to remain in the dark about what is going on. This should not be done for every attribute check, but only on a limited scale and as needed. The players should continue to roll attribute checks and saves as normally needed in the game.

DIFFICULTY OF ATTRIBUTE CHECKS

The chart in the attribute section shows that as a character's attributes increase the character's capacity to perform herculean tasks increases, as well. The Castle Keeper, of course, sets the difficulty range of any check, and the standard range is from 0 to 10. A 10 difficulty implies a heroic task, so even **10th-12th level** characters will find it difficult to perform CL 10 tasks. However, as with most rules in C&C, CKs can adjust this limit as necessary for their game. For instance, a check might have a difficulty range from -10 to 20, or more, depending on the CK's decided ease or difficulty of the situation.

Example: Let us assume there are two doors, both of which cannot be entered by any other means than by picking their locks. A locksmith apprentice created the lock on the first door, and a dwarven master locksmith constructed the lock on the second door. Picking the first door's lock would have a CL of 0, while the second lock would have a CL of 10. Now let us throw in a third lock. A blind farmer made this thirds lock from wood parts. This third lock receives a -10 modification to the CL. The characters find one more locked door in the adventure; a deity of locksmithing made this lock to prevent anyone without a key from ever entering the door, so this lock can have any number of modifications, perhaps extending its CL to 20.

As you can see, the modifications can vary greatly. The Castle Keeper needs to be aware of this and apply the appropriate modifications, keeping in mind that either chance wins the day, making the CL fit the situation, or that the CK can guide the outcome by setting it high or low.

Example: Here's a pick-pocket example. Picking the pocket of a wary, nervous, guarded merchant might be a CL 3 task, and should that merchant have his purse sewn into his shirt, it could be a CL 8 check. But what if the merchant with the sewn-in pouch gets drunk? The modification then drops to CL 4. And what if the target is in a large, noisy, crowded bar in which people are constantly jostling one another? Perhaps in this case the modification becomes a CL 0. And what if the thief in questions enlists the aid of a barmaid to attract the merchant's attention while the thief tries to relieve the merchant's purse of its gold coin? Why, in this case, there might be a -3 modification to the CL.

Situations matter. Circumstances matter. There are no hard-and-fast rules concerning this type of activity. There cannot be considering the vast number of variables that can go into the successful performance of any given action. The CK must be aware of situations affecting an attribute check and adjudicate an appropriate modification to the CL for that action.

Very easy, simple, heroic, or herculean tasks fall in this the range. Using negative modifiers is rarely necessary, but is sometimes useful because these tasks are supposed to be easy. These really only count for low-level characters, as higher level characters with attribute modifiers already have a great chance of succeeding at checks with a CL of 0. Very difficult tasks are difficult or nearly impossible to perform, such as actually untying Gordian's knot.

Example: Climbing a 120-foot-tall loblolly pine is difficult, but climbing a tree, in general, is not. This specific type of tree is very difficult to climb because loblolly pines do not have low branches. Their first branches begin at about 50-100 feet up, depending on the growth pattern, but the tree does not grow a low branch. Climbing a fir tree is easy because it has so many low-lying branches. How high the character climbs up the tree counts, as well. In both these situations, there is a lot to consider. Just about anyone can scamper up about 5 feet of loblolly by sheer dint of will and nearly jumping. But to get to the top, climbing by hand, that is a feat of tremendous skill. Climbing a fir to its near top is easy, as there are so many branches. Climbing a loblolly would require an attribute check. Climbing a fir tree may or may not—the choice belongs to the CK - but any required check would be an easy one, meaning it has a CL of 0.

Now consider staying up in that tree. Tree climbing is dangerous, even for experienced climbers with equipment. Windy conditions cause trees to sway a lot. Trees with branches have weak spots, and they crack, causing people to fall. Falling out of a tree is nasty business.

So, it is an easy task to climb the fir tree (CL 0), and it is a difficult task to climb the loblolly (CL 7). Staying in the tree would be a CL 5 for the loblolly and a CL 2 for the fir tree. These, of course, are random, and the CK may adjust as desired. But it's the specifics that he may want to consider. If no specifics are desired, assign a CL giving a reasonable chance of failure.

Example: How difficult is it to find a book in a library, even one using the Dewey decimal system? If you know to use the card catalog or the library's computer system, and you know the library's shelving system, then finding the right book should be an easy task, say a CL 1. What if the library's owner devised his own cataloging method, however, and the library had thousands of books? Additionally, the librarian made numerous errors when shelving the books in his own system, and ultimately he never shelved the books in the proper manner. How difficult would finding a specific book then be? Figuring out the system would be the first task (say CL 3), and then discovering the librarian failed to consistently use the system suddenly makes it difficult (CL 6); then, if the system was never actually followed, and the character has to search the stacks, then the final task would be monumental (CL 9). What could be an easy task is thus made difficult.

The point is that any number of factors can go into setting the difficulty level for an action. The Castle Keeper needs to keep this in mind when creating difficulty levels for tasks. But the Castle Keeper also needs to keep the game in mind. In the library example, what if it's the case that the characters need a piece of information from a book in that library for the adventure to continue? Would you really want the adventure to end because they could not find a book? Probably not.

However, if finding the book is part of the adventure, the CK may have to change things up a bit. In such a case, the Castle Keeper might make the characters roll several times before discovering the filing system just does not work and the books are jumbled and in no certain order. He may have them make a check each day they search the library. A successful roll indicates the information is located and the game continues. This method has a small cost, of course, in that time passes. The appropriate checks are still required; it is just that the PCs need to be successful at some point, as the adventure requires it, so the PCs require as much time as necessary to discover the information to continue the adventure.

So the CK must consider the story, consider the task's difficulty, how the task plays out in the story, and what happens if the characters fail. Not that failure is bad. As noted, failure can often propel the story in a positive direction, as long as the story continues to go forward.

Note: The CK should not create an adventure such that its conclusion depends upon one die roll, or he should do so very rarely and be willing to live with the consequences.

The following discusses difficulty checks against other characters or creatures.

Example: If a character is acting against another classed character (such as a rogue picking the pocket of a rogue), then the CL is adjusted (if applicable) by the level of the character/NPC who is being acted upon. So a **5th level** rogue picking the pocket of a **5th level** rogue would have to overcome a minimum of CL 5 above and beyond situational and attribute modifiers.

Example: Whenever a character is trying to listen for an NPC or creature who is trying to move silently, then the CL of the check is equal to the level of the creature the PC is listening for. If a player rogue is listening (making the check) to see if he can hear something and an NPC elf is trying to sneak up on the character, then the level or HD of the elf and any situational or attribute modifiers he may have are added to the listening check's CL.

Example: A ranger is tracking another ranger who is actively trying to hide his tracks. The CK adjusts the tracking CL upwards by the level of the ranger trying to conceal his tracks.

ADDING LEVELS

The character's level is almost always added to an attribute check. It is an understood premise that as the characters advance in levels they advance in experience. Their experiences, through either observation or action, have improved their skill in successfully performing actions. The characters' chances of success improve by 5% at each additional level. This includes the characters' effectiveness in prime and non-prime attributes.

Considering this improvement by levels, the CK may disallow the character to add his character level in particular circumstances.

Example: In running a three-year campaign wherein a rogue advanced to **8th level** and in-game almost a decade passed, that player's character never once picked a pocket. When he attempted to do so for the first time since starting the game, the CK did not allow the character to add his level to the check. It was a harsh ruling, but the character had simply not performed the action since his early youth, and really had no grounds for adding his level to the check. It is not suggested that every CK be so harsh, but be aware, circumstances can arise wherein ruling may occur which seems harsh and counter to the norm but is, in actuality, clarifications of the theme the rules are setting.

Example: Assume a **7th level** knight is attempting to enter a guild. The character must solve a puzzle to pass an initiation. intelligence would be the typical attribute. This knight, however, has never worked to solve a puzzle in his lifetime. In this case, the knight should not be allowed to add his level to the check.

In short, there are times in which adding the character's level might be wrong. Most people know when these events arise. A first-time encounter of an obstacle (of whatever nature) cannot rely on previous experiences, which is what a character's level represents. Whenever a character encounters an entirely new event, it's at the CK's discretion as to whether or not to allow the character to add his level to a check.

Note: If the CK desires to pursue this path, make certain characters fully understand this exception to the standard rule before play begins.

Another situation in which characters should not be allowed to add their levels to checks are when they attempt to perform class-specific actions of another class - assuming the Castle Keeper even allows characters to make such attempts.

Common examples of class-specific abilities include picking pockets, tracking, hiding, moving silently, listening, etc. It does not mean that a character cannot necessarily attempt to perform certain actions (anyone can try to hide, for instance), it's just that through specialized training and experience some characters are better at it than others. They understand the principles of hiding (motion, shadows, etc.) or picking pockets (distraction, fluid motion target selection, and timing) or listening (drowning out surrounding noises, where to hold one's ear, etc.). In each of these cases, anyone can try to perform the action, but they are simply not good at it; they lack the background knowledge to perform these actions well, and they are not capable of learning to improve.

So, in general, characters add their levels to attribute checks, except when they are trying to perform a class-specific action which they have not used in play, or when they are trying to perform another class' designated class-specific action, like tracking or picking pockets.

Attribute Modifiers

Attribute modifiers are always added to the attribute check whether prime, non-prime, experienced or not. This rule remains constant throughout the game.

ACTIONS AGAINST OPPOSING ATRIBUTES

How does one resolve a situation in which a character is trying to grab something out of the hand of a dryad or some other creature? Remember, there are no opposed rolls in **C&C**. Instead, the character performs the action against the opposition's attribute, with the primary or non-primary designation of the attribute in question and the creature's level or hit dice determining the action's difficulty level, not an opposing roll. So, if the opposition's attribute is a prime, CL 6 is added the action's CB; if the opposition's attribute is secondary, the CL is +0.

In the above example, a dryad's dexterity is not her prime attribute (dryads have mental prime abilities), so only the dryad's hit dice is added to the check for a CL 4. Change the dryad into an orc, who has dexterity as a prime and it is different. The CK would add +6 and +1 to the CL, for the dexterity and hit dice respectively. So if a **1st level** character with dexterity as a primary attribute attempted to grab a shoe out of the orc's hand, the CB would be 12+6 and +1 for a 19, meaning the character would have to roll a 19 or better to successfully grab it. A rogue character would add his level and attribute bonus when making this grab attempt.

RETRYING ATTRIBUTE CHECKS

Generally speaking, characters can only attempt to overcome a difficultly once. If they fail, this means they did not possess the abilities to overcome the challenge. The rogue above who

attempts to pick the lock fails, because the locking mechanism was too complicated for him to overcome This of course assumes there is only one way to solve a problem. In the example of the missing book above, the searcher was able to approach the problem from different angles. In the case of picking a lock there is generally only one way to spring the lock, unless of course the character becomes more creative and attempts to actually dismantle the whole door mechanism. In this case it would require a second check.

PERFORMING THOSE ACTIONS

How does the player actually perform the action requiring an attribute check? Although this seems like a simple question with an obvious answer, it is one that can be fairly important. The *how* came be part of the role-playing, giving the CK room to add or subtract to the CL. Perhaps the player has a creative way to climb the wall, or has some piece of equipment that allows him to track better; players should willingly bring anything to the table that may affect the CL, and the CK should welcome the players' ingenuity.

Example 1: A rogue wants to pick a merchant's pocket. The player tells the CK, "I pick the merchant's pocket." Let's assume then that the street is not abnormally crowded and people are milling about in a normal fashion. The CK may judge that no modification is necessary, but he may also judge the action is somewhat difficult because jostling the merchant for the "pick" might seem unusual in such a situation as the one described.

However, if the player added in detail about the *how* of his attempt, it could affect the Castle Keeper's determination of the action's difficulty.

Example 2: The player tells the CK, "I follow the merchant at a discreet distance for a few minutes or more, waiting for a moment when he is stopping to look at something, enters into a conversation, or is otherwise distracted. But I don't attempt the pick right away. Instead, I wait to see what happens." The CK responds with, "Well, the merchant moves at a brisk pace for a bit, stops to greet someone, and then moves on a little further. Finally, he stops in front of a fruit stand and begins chatting up the vendor." The player might say,' "I move up to the fruit stand, as well, and I interrupt the conversation to ask for some fruit. At the same time, I gently nudge the merchant and attempt to pick his pocket." In this instance the CK might judge that the character laid the groundwork for a greater chance of success with the pick-pocketing attempt and award a -1 or -2 to the situation's CL.

The players should be encouraged to describe how they are performing their various actions. Of course, in some cases, there may not really be anything to describe. But in others, there is enough variability in a situation to allow for character choice in approach, which, when fully detailed, can dramatically affect an attribute check's outcome.

Let us consider another situation.

Example: A character is attempting to roll a boulder out of the way of a door. In a normal situation, a player may say, "I attempt to roll the boulder out of the away." The CK would say a strength check is required and would modify the CL by a +2 due to the weight and position of the boulder. But if the player instead said, "I look at the boulder and try to disscover whichever side would be easiest to roll to, where the preponderant weight is located, and then find a device to use as a lever to help me move the object," the CK might knock the strength check's CL down by a few, because the character put some thought into the best way to proceed with the action. In all, performing an action should not just be a simple request for an attribute check, but should require the character to put some thought and description into what they are doing. This can always affect the outcome. The Castle Keeper should encourage the players to join him in the story-telling aspect of the game, making them painfully aware their additions to the game's detail and story often improve their chance of success.

Conflict resolution is as much descriptive as it is mechanical—or it should be or *can* be. It also improves the game's flavor and fun when players describe their characters' actions rather than just outright rolling for an attribute check.

ADJUDICATING THE UNFORESEEABLE

Situations will arise throughout the game for which the rules cannot account for. After having played various incarnations of RPGs for over 30 years, it has become painfully obvious that players are quite ingenuous at devising difficult situations for a Castle Keeper to make a ruling on because the rules simply do not address the issue. This is the very reason why many rule sets for RPGs have so many subset rules systems and rules of differing natures stacked one on top of another.

Players will argue with the Castle Keeper about rulings and suggest more ingenious methods of bringing about a judicious manner of adjudicating a situation than the Castle Keeper can, or so they say. This book cannot address every issue. Creating more rules creates more questions and bogs the CK down with more rules to learn. However, the strength of the SIEGE Engine lies in its versatility. It is versatile enough and adaptable enough that the CK can use it to adjudicate almost any, if not all, situations arising at the game table.

Castle & Crusades has its own rules system. This rules system is deeply ingrained in the way *the game* has been played for 30 years. But the adaptive nature of its underlying mechanic is what makes it an adaptable game, incorporating elements from every other game as individual CKs see fit.

Considering this, it is suggested and strongly encouraged that the CK not break with the basic SIEGE Engine mechanic when designing a rule to adjudicate a situation not addressed in the rulebook. The description of the SIEGE Engine above should show you how malleable the entire system is and how simply almost all actions can be managed. When a unique situation arises, simply find a manner to apply SIEGE Engine to it.

CHAPTER 16 – TREASURE

Treasure is the grease that makes everything happens in **Castles & Crusades**. It fuels the fire of the first time gamer, opening up his world to a host of new and better weapons, armor, and equipment. Treasure makes an adventuring party happy to face death many times over, killing zombies and ghouls in a nasty nest of undead. It is, in the end, one of the two main objects of any role playing game; wealth gained through the wild dangers of adventure! Beyond that however, treasure affords the CK a host of opportunities to expand the game, drive role playing encounters, and make action and danger more intense. Treasure serves these capacities and more, as the enterprising character will desire, at some point, to develop his own magic, creating potions, scrolls, and other items more useful to him and his party.

TOO MUCH OR TOO LITTLE

The role of treasure in your world depends upon the style of play, the type of game you are playing, and whether or not that game is a campaign or a one night shot. If running games at conventions, for a bunch of rowdy players who want to plunder a dungeon, then by all means awarding whatever the dice yield and more is a good way to capitalize on the fun of the moment. Doing a similar thing in a long going campaign may lead to disaster as players become disinterested in magic and gold at early levels because they have a plentiful supply of magic items in their broom closet, artifacts hanging on their belts, and gold that the greatest Kings would envy.

Keeping a level balance is easy to do. The monsters as presented in both **Monsters & Treasure** and **Monsters & Treasure of Aihrde** offer a numerical value that establishes what is normal for that monster. Do not be restricted to it or the dice rolls as it determines what that treasure consists of. Rather, use those charts as guidelines awarding items that might come in handy in future adventures you have already begun to plan for and enough wealth to refurbish and refit lost and damaged equipment. Always err on the side of caution, if it seems too much, it probably is and simply round down the figures. It is better to have a little less than a little more as the more accumulates over several gaming sessions and the CK quickly learns the changing nature of the Player Characters.

If your player's cleric has to decide if he wants to use the *+3 mace of smiting* or the *+2 mace of terror*, and if he should wear the *+3 armor of etherealness* or the *armor of spell resistance*, and all of your players have similar decisions, your campaign probably has too much magic in it. If your player group has gone six years of gaming every Saturday, and the highest level PC is 5th level and the party has one *+1 short sword* that they are all proud of, your campaign probably has too little magic and treasure in it.

Giving out too little treasure can be harmful to the health of your campaign. In the beginning of any campaign, as the Castle Keeper, you are trying to encourage your players to come to every session and have fun. One of the ways this is accomplished is to give them interesting magic items to try out, and to give them enough treasure to buy useful equipment and knowledge. A Castle Keeper, especially one just starting out, should strictly adhere to the Treasure Tables in **Monsters & Treasure** and the percentage rolls found there to hand out enough treasure for the needs of the players.

Giving out too much treasure causes its own set of problems for the players. A great deal of the interest in role-playing is the struggle to survive and grow in a dangerous world. If a character can buy any magic item they want and pay cash for the building of their castle when they are level two, they aren't going to have near as much fun as if they adventure and work hard for the same advantages.

Example: The Dragon Slayer group walked through the magic market in the city of the Mad Mage. Said to be the most magical place in several dimensions, the group could see this was true. Each one of the six had saved 150,000gp and this was in pouches under their clothes. They had come to buy some magic and weren't leaving the market until they each found what they were looking for. They looked at *boots of elvenkind* for 20,000gp, a *flying carpet* for 25,000gp, *gloves of dexterity* for 50,000gp and there were several *oath bows* to be had for 60,000gp each.

Depending on how magical your campaign is, any given book price for a magic item goes up in price. In a gritty game world, it should be impossible to buy magic. Your players will have to quest for items, and they will be rare. In an epic, magic-rich campaign, the merchants are all going to try and get top dollar for magic items, which means asking more in gold for each item than that listed in the **Monsters & Treasure**. It's up to the Player Character to barter down the price.

As a rule of thumb, if after three gaming sessions the party is significantly poorer through no real fault of their own but rather from equipment wastage and small treasure portions, it is time to reassess your approach to treasure. Add more to the mix to keep the Players coming back to the table.

ROLE-PLAYING TOOL

Treasure has a greater role than simply pacifying players and making their journey's toil worth the endeavor. Treasure is another tool that allows both players and CKs to expand the role playing experience. Using treasure as a tool to enhance play or as a control is easy for the CK to do and easy for the player to take advantage of.

Centerpiece or Backdrop

Treasure is a huge motivating force for players and their characters and using it as a tool to drive the game is a hallmark of good Castle Keeping. Treasure takes many shapes and sizes, from simple wealth as expressed in coin, to the more fantastic magic items crafted by or even containing gods. Using treasure as a catalyst for games is easy to do through hinting to the characters of fabulous and wonderful wealth that lies just beyond the bend. When using treasure as a catalyst, the crucial question becomes what role the treasure itself plays in the adventure. Does it

become the centerpiece of what the characters aim for? Or is it more of a background thing, where the characters hear of the treasure but the true object is some other design.

Centerpiece treasure generally has some value beyond the monetary. This type of treasure is possessed of some unusual power or ability. It may be ancient and worth more to the story arc than actual mechanical value. Sometimes the centerpiece treasure is itself sentient and able to communicate with the players, or plays some role in an upcoming apocalypse. The item is what the characters are seeking or fighting for, it is the purpose of the adventure or campaign. Once achieved, it retains much of its value to the adventure, driving the character that possesses it or the next series of adventures. Heirlooms, artifacts, and relics all fall into this category.

Example: The young paladin Bryan had a vision that bespoke of a journey that he must undertake. He must travel south, crossing the great Grundichle Mountains and there take a river craft down to Aenoch Valley. Here his journey would continue to the sea where he must find a ship and journey into the deep southern seas in quest of the Island of Pivore, there he would meet many challenges. But if he overcame them, the holy sword, Durendale, would be his to command. The adventure itself crosses several thousands of miles and promises at least a year's game time and all the myriad encounters he and his comrades must necessarily make on the road.

Backdrop treasures are slightly different, in that they do not take center stage, no matter their size, power, or value. The CK uses them to spur the characters on in an already existing adventure or as an ancillary plot line. The treasures may aid the characters through some difficult task or simply give them enough power to overcome a foe. These tend to be standard treasures listed in **Monsters & Treasure or Monsters** and **Treasure of Aihrde**; however, the CK should not shy away from using artifacts, relics, etc. for such plot devices. The item (or items) in question plays the role assigned to it by the CK so long as they retain some control of the item, such as allowing it to break after its intended purpose, etc.

Example: The young paladin Bryan sets off on his first adventure, knowing full well that he is one of the weakest in his brotherhood. His brothers-in-arms have taught him well and set the vision of the holy avenger Durendale in front of him so that he muses upon it all the time, desirous to have the sword, but knowing he can only attempt to attain it after a long road of adventures.

The Quest

The most common plot device for treasure is the quest. Seeking an item or items sets the perfect goal for any group of characters. It establishes a clear line of march for the adventure, one that the CK can people with all manner of traps, monsters, terrain obstacles, etc. The CK controls the difficulty of the quest as well as the item itself, whether great or small, useful or not. It allows for tremendous manipulation of the plot. For example, the CK can allow the introduction of others with knowledge of the item or some perhaps seeking it as well.

Bring it Down

Treasure can serve the opposite role too, bringing the adventure down a notch. If the characters amass too much treasure through a natural hoarding instinct, or the CKs accidently allow too much into the game, the CK can weaken the treasure or claim that it is not as valuable as it actually is.

Example: The player character elf ranger, Eritrean, comes into the city of Elne with his Dragon Slayers character party. They have just had an extremely successful set of adventures in the Troll Glades and they are laden down with raw and cut gems of many types. Going to several jewelers, they are astounded to get 30,000gp for the twenty gems; many of them were star rubies, star sapphires, and purple star sapphires. They should have gotten 300,000gp for all of that, but they didn't know any better and were well satisfied. They then went to several wizards and sold a *rod of absorption* for 10,000gp; *that should have gone for 50,000gp*. They sold a wand of levitation for 6,000gp; *that should have gone for 26,000gp*. They didn't know what the *orb of storms* was and sold it for 10,000gp, *when they could have gotten 49,500gp for it*. They walked out of the city having purchased several sets of quality armor and flat broke. They had smiles on their faces and were ready for the next big adventure; *so were all the merchants that had cheated them in the city of Elne.*

EXPANDING TREASURE

Treasure comes in many different styles and sizes, and all of it can have a role-playing element to the experience that can be fun for the players and the Castle Keepers alike. There are many creatures in fantasy RPGs that can manufacture treasure, whether coin or magic items. Taking the standard items and expanding on their origins, their make-up, and even their effect on the game's play is easy to do.

COINS

All experienced players and CKs understand the normal exchange rate of coins. They also know that about ten coins equals a pound in whatever type of metal the coin presents.

Generally, carrying around large quantities of coins is cumbersome to characters and they often wish to exchange them for gems or jewelry, or even deposit them in banks. As fantasy worlds do not generally possess economies based upon complex banking systems, it is usually only possible to find money changers or lenders who take the money in at a fee. These are rare, and are often as crooked as the monsters that the characters originally took their money from.

The average money lender takes a 5% or 10% fee for his services and offers no real guarantee. The money is not exchangeable from one city or town to the next, there are no checkbooks the characters can carry. On occasions the money lender might issue a writ that other money lenders will honor, but this is something the CK must work out in their own campaigns and worlds as it implies a series of interconnected NPCs (see **Chapter 6** above).

Exchanging coins for gems is a far more common thing for characters to do. Any exchange works out to the characters

disadvantage, i.e. 150gp in coin would yield several gems that are worth about 125gp. Characters can find these gem-houses in almost all larger towns and cities.

Unusual Coins

It is perfectly acceptable to turn this normal equation around. There is a world of fun role-playing to be had just by realizing that each race is going to make coins differently. Along the same lines, merchants are never going to give a player character the proper trade amount for their coins and often try to cheat the player character. When handing out treasure, consider the different races and their styles of making things.

TABLE 16.1 STANDARD VALUE OF COINS

A Number Of Coins	=	1 Coin
10 copper pieces	=	1 silver piece
10 silver pieces	=	1 gold piece
10 gold pieces	=	1 platinum piece

Example: The following highlights one of many possibilities that might occur in any fantasy RPG.

Dwarven Coin: Dwarves are a simple race with good engineering skills. Their standard coin is a small square bar of gold with dwarven runes stamped on both sides and is called the Achum. It weighs about what three human Crown gold coins would weigh and while dwarves will give the proper exchange rate, humans want to only give two Crown for every Achum. Elves want to give one Crown for every Achum.

Elf Coin: Elves appreciate silver much more than gold and their standard coin is a silver oval, the Eli, equal to two times the weight of a normal Mark, or silver coin. Elves always give the proper exchange rate, while humans want to give only Mark for every Eli. Dwarves are only willing to give a half of a Mark for the worth of one elf silver coin.

Orc Coin: Orcs make special hammers with orc runes on the hammerhead. They take a blob of precious metal and pound it on the top and bottom to create a large orc coin called a plate. They then trim off the sides making a coin about five inches around. In weight, it's about five Crown. All other races, when taking the orc coin in exchange, try to only give two human sized coins for the orc coin, because it is an orc coin after all.

With these ideas in mind, your new exchange chart reads like this:

TABLE 16.2 VALUE OF COINS ADJUSTED

A Number Of Coins	=	In Human Gold Coins
10 gold dwarf squares (achum)	=	30 human round gold coins (crown)
10 silver elf ovals (eli)	=	20 human round silver coins (mark)
10 gold orc plates	=	50 human round gold coins (crown)

Example: "You've found a good treasure with the trolls. There are 90 gold dwarf achum, 60 silver eli, and 10 gold orc plates." It looks like they are going to have to do a little more role-playing to discover what they really have.

Castle Keeper Notes On Coins and Weight

Use some common sense when it comes to handing out coins for treasure. While the wandering monster might be entitled to 6d8 (x100) in gold coins, it is just not going to carry 5,400 gold coins weighing a total of five hundred and forty pounds. One trick a castle keeper might keep in mind is changing up the gold, silver, and copper, especially in the large treasures. Cast the 10,000 gold into a solid cube of gold weighing 1,000 pounds. Put the 30,000 in silver into a round orb of solid silver three feet tall and wide. You will have a great time as a Castle Keeper watching them dull their weapons trying to slice off hunks of the cube of gold or the sphere of silver.

EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS

Throughout the history of mankind there have been fine craftsmen making highly prized items out of precious metals and gems. Not as obvious, but just as valuable are items carefully crafted out of normal wood and metals. While there are printed values for these types of items, any merchant worth his salt is not going to want to pay full price for an item. More role-playing happens when player characters try to sell their silver snuffbox worth 100gp to a merchant that only wants to pay 10gp so that he can sell it for 100gp.

EXAMPLE: The Dragon Slayers player character group is wandering in a dungeon with Chad Braveheart, the group's human paladin, leading the way. "You've come into a living room that's filled with all sorts of furniture," the Castle Keeper says. "We'll just toss it quickly looking for treasures," Chad replies. CK: "You see many well made bits of furniture and the like, but no gold or jewelry." Chad: "Well, we will just go to the next room then." The party walks by a painted silver vase worth 5,000gp, a rack of platinum goblets worth 12,000gp, and a platinum statue worth 20,000gp. The adventure continues.

All types of characters like to have expensive things around them. The better their things, the more status they have in their community. It's possible to run an entire campaign where coins and jewels are rare and treasures are mainly well-made things. The possibilities for those things are endless and once again, a great deal of fun role-playing unfolds in creating things built by the various races.

All costs are in human gold coins.

TABLE 16.3 EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS BY RACE

D%	Elf Item (cost)	Dwarf Item (cost)	Orc Item (cost)
1-4	Oak Pipe (10)	Copper Pipe (20)	Ivory Pipe (75)
5-8	Writing Things (30)	Writing Things (10)	Writing Things (5)
9-12	Silver Snuff Box (250)	Gold Snuff Box (400)	Iron Snuff Box (35)
13-16	Mechanical Toy (5d10)	Mechanical Toy (9d10)	Mechanical Toy (1)
17-20	9 Oak Plate Sets (7d10)	9 Iron Plate Sets (3d10)	9 Clay Plate Sets (1)
21-24	Darkwood Vase (300)	Bronze Vase (200)	White Stone Vase (75)
25-28	Blackthorn Goblet (30)	Iron Goblet (10)	Tin Cup (1)
29-32	Redwood Trencher (25)	Iron Trencher (5)	Clay Trencher (1)
33-36	Willow Canteen (30)	Copper Canteen (15)	Leather Canteen (1)
37-40	Elf Harp (200)	Dwarf Harp (100)	Orc Tangar Harp (20)
41-44	Hunter's Horn (300)	Hunter's Horn (40)	Hunter's Horn (5)
45-48	Mandolin (250)	Mandolin (190)	Mandolin (75)
49-52	Reed Panpipes (75)	Copper Panpipes (100)	Ivory Panpipes (300)
53-56	Fancy Belt (100)	Fancy Belt (50)	Bandoleer (10)
57-60	Panther Cloak (75)	Cave Bear Cloak(100)	Unicorn Cloak (400)
61-64	Blackthorn Egg (50)	Iron Egg (2)	Cockatrice Egg (600)
65-68	Small Oak Statue (150)	Small Bronze Statue (350)	Small Lava Statue (50)
69-72	Darkwood Coffer (1,000)	Mithral Coffer (3,000)	Crystal Coffer (300)
73-76	Blackthorn Staff (100)	Iron Staff (40)	Iron Capped Oak Staff (190)
77-80	Dragonskin Pack (150)	T-Rex Pack (75)	Giant Rat Pack (5)
81-84	Redwood Throne (1,000)	Gold Throne (23,000)	Black Marble Throne (17,000)
85-88	Dining Table (100)	Dining Table (75)	Dining Table (10)
89-92	Oil Painting (300)	Stone Painting (25)	Blood Painting (9)
93-96	Quality Bench (25)	Marble Bench (50)	Stalactite Bench (10)
97-100	Gloves (25)	Gloves (10)	Gloves (1)

JEWELRY

The Castle Keeper uses jewelry to break up the boredom of treasure so that he isn't just giving out 10,000gp for every encounter. However, pieces of jewelry can be adventure hooks as players go looking for specialty items unearthed in hordes of treasure. For example, elfin royal necklaces. Jewelry is also created along racial lines as elfin jewelry tends to be made of emeralds, coral, and pearls in the shapes of leaves and berries. Dwarven jewelry tends to be made of red gold with lots of large rubies, dark diamonds, and quality quartz in many colors. Orc jewelry has lots of platinum in it and is usually very large, done in topaz, sunstones, and beryl. If a gold torque is worth 3,000gp, that doesn't mean it weighs 300 pounds. It means the craftsmanship of the item puts an approximate value of 3,000gp on the piece.

All costs are in human gold coins.

TABLE 16.4 JEWELRY BY RACE

D%	Elf Item (cost)	Dwarf Item (cost)	Orc Item (cost)
1-4	Ankle Chain (250)	Ankle Chain (150)	Ankle Chain (25)
5-8	Arm Cuff (100)	Arm Band (75)	Arm Bracelet (90)
9-12	Belt (25)	Chain Belt (10)	Rope Belt (5)
13-16	Gem Bracelet (1,000)	Steel Bracelet (15)	Copper Bracelet (5)
17-20	Deity Brooch (500)	Clan Brooch (50)	Warrior Brooch (25)
21-24	Oak Buckle (90)	Iron Buckle (2)	Bronze Buckle (5)
25-28	Emerald Button (100)	Iron Button (1)	Tooth Button (1)
29-32	Coral Collar (250)	Bronze Collar (100)	Black Crystal Collar (25)
33-36	Oak Choker (50)	Opal Choker (1,000)	Peridot Choker (100)
37-40	Emerald Earrings (3,000)	Gold Earrings (400)	Ivory Earrings (100)
41-44	Coral Locket (300)	Gold Locket (75)	Crystal locket (100)
45-48	Blackthorn Medallion (25)	Bronze Medallion (250)	Garnet Medallion (100)
49-52	Emerald Necklace (1,000)	Ruby Necklace (5,000)	Diamond Necklace (10,000)
53-56	Amber Pendant (750)	Diamond Pendant (5,000)	Wolf Fang Pendant (25)
57-60	Oak Leaf Ring (50)	Red Sapphire Ring (1,000)	Black Pearl Ring (500)
61-64	Green Topaz Stud (100)	Ruby Stud (750)	Gold Stud (50)
65-68	Silver Tiara (1,000)	Ruby Tiara (10,000)	Platinum Tiara (5,000)
69-72	Silver Torque (1,000)	Gold Torque (3,000)	Bronze Torque (500)
73-76	Silver Waist Chain (60)	Gold Waist Chain (1,000)	Bronze Waist Chain (750)
77-80	Emerald Ear Cuff (1,000)	Mithral Ear Cuff (5,000)	Copper Ear Cuff (25)
81-84	Silver Nose Chain (30)	Gold Nose Chain (50)	Iron Nose Chain (20)
85-88	Silver Eye Mast (100)	Gold Eye Mask (400)	Bronze Eye Mask (750)
89-92	Emerald Navel Ring (500)	Ruby Naval Ring (1,000)	Amber Navel Ring (750)
93-96	Emerald Fan (750)	Diamond Fan (2,000)	Pearl Fan (1,500)
97-100	Silver Tongue Stud (100)	Gold Tongue Stud (250)	Platinum Tongue Stud (1,000)

PRECIOUS METALS

Copper, silver, electrum, gold, platinum, and mithral are all considered precious metals in most fantasy campaigns. Although coins are the normal medium for these metals, there are lots of role-playing reasons for turning these precious metals into something different.

Example: The Bandit King of the Elkhorn Deeps just had his treasure hoard robbed for the third time this year. "That's it!" he screamed at his drinking buddies. "No one is going to take my gold and silver again." "How can you say that?" Wren o' the Blade asked. "I'm going to melt down the gold into large cubes. It will weigh a thousand pounds. I'll make round molds for the silver and the silver spheres will weigh more than the gold. Ha! Let them just try getting that out of my vaults!" the Bandit King laughed. Right then, Wren was glad he had invested all those jewels in a *portable hole*.

People and monsters that have large hoards of coin also have the time to mold it into anything they want. Governments form gold, silver, and platinum into bars. There is nothing stopping NPCs from making large cubes of gold, big spheres of silver, or even triangles of platinum. Metal can also be melted into large blocks or ingots.

Mithral and similar metals should be the rarest of metals. Often characters aren't aware of such metals magical properties.

Example: Chad of the Dragon Slayers group called the others over to a small treasure chest. "Look at these, Theon; have you ever seen their like?" Chad held a cloth bag in his hand. There were seven silver-red coins in the bag. Each was about three inches in diameter. A dwarf face was etched into one side and a red dragon's head was on the other. "What you have there is Mithral," Theon the dwarf said. "One of those is worth a hundred gold coins, maybe more to a dwarf smith."

GEMS

There are well over a hundred types of gems taken from the earth, and often they are dull things of little apparent worth. They can have flaws and cracks in their makeup so that they aren't as valuable as they would seem. They also can have patterns within their surface making them magical and each worth a much higher price than the jeweler cut version of the same stone. A gem cutter can bring out the color of a gem through polishing and cutting. What appeared to be dull red transformed into bright crimson and its worth increases ten fold. Once again, a great deal of fun role-playing is in the offing as characters try to get worth out of the gems they find.

Size also matters when it comes to gems. All of the ones listed below are thumbnail size. When the stones are larger, their values double or triple. When you have a large treasure of gems, roll the appropriate dice to determine if any of them are of unusual size or just make the two best gems large and double their price.

With the following chart, it won't be necessary to just give out gems anymore. All prices are in gold.

TABLE 16.5 CONDITIONS OF GEMS

D%	Gem Type	Raw	Flawed	Cut	Pattern
1-4	Agate	10	25	50	500
5-8	Alexandrite	10	25	50	500
9-12	Amber	100	250	500	n/a*
13-16	Amethyst	100	250	500	2,500
17-20	Aquamarine	20	50	100	2,000
21-24	Aventurine	20	50	100	3,000
25-28	Bloodstone	200	400	500	4,000
29-32	Carnelian	20	50	100	5,000
33-36	Chrysoprase	10	30	100	1,000
37-40	Citrine	10	25	50	500
41-44	Coral	25	50	100	n/a
45-48	Diamond, blue	250	500	5,000	n/a
49-52	Diamond, yellow	1,000	3,000	15,000	n/a
53-56	Diamond, crimson	1,000	2,000	20,000	65,000
57-60	Emerald	200	400	5,000	20,000
61-64	Garnet	10	25	50	5,000
65-68	Jade, blue	25	50	100	n/a
69-72	Jade, crimson	25	75	100	n/a
73-76	Jade, green	200	400	500	n/a
77-80	Jasper	25	50	100	3,000
81	Kunzite	10	25	50	1,000
82	Lapis Lazuli	10	25	50	10,000
83	Malachite	25	50	100	5,000
84	Moissanite	200	400	500	10,000
85	Moonstone	300	400	500	25,000
86	Obsidian	10	25	50	20,000
87	Onyx	25	50	100	5,000
88	Opal	25	75	100	n/a
89	Pearl, black	200	500	1,000	n/a
90	Pearl, white	250	750	500	n/a
91	Peridot	25	50	100	2,000
92	Quartz	10	25	50	n/a
93	Ruby	100	300	5,000	60,000
94	Sapphire	300	750	10,000	70,000
95	Spinel	25	75	100	1,000
96	Tanzanite	25	75	100	2,000
97	Tiger Eye	30	80	100	25,000
98	Topaz	200	750	10,000	35,000
99	Tourmaline	25	75	1,000	10,000
100	Turquoise	10	40	50	n/a

* n/a listings under reference means that type of gem can't have a pattern.

Raw and flawed gems can be sent to a gem cutter to work them over and possibly make them more valuable. This is yet another chance for some fun role-playing.

All gems with a pattern in them have magical properties. The strongest weapons with the largest bonuses all have one or more gems with a pattern placed in the pommel. Artifacts all have patterned gems worked into the device. Many of the more powerful magic items also have this type of gem. The pattern vastly increases the worth of the gem, but may, if the CK deems

it, be necessary when a character is trying to make a powerful magic item of some type.

Example: By changing the style of gem and its nature the CK enhances role playing and imagery immeasurably. "You find a ruby, three sapphires, a tiger eye, and a topaz" or alternatively, "You find a star ruby the size of a hen's egg, a flawed sapphire, a cut sapphire, a fist-sized star sapphire, a star tiger eye, and a raw topaz."

ARMS & ARMOR

Many types of weapons and armor aren't magical but are still worth having. Player characters can have interesting adventures searching for the best equipment for them to have. They can also find unusual equipment in the treasure hoards of foes they discover. The unusual smithing skills of each race allow them to generate arms and armor that seems magical, but is just unusually well made using the secrets of each race. The following is a list of arms and armor for each race. Castle Keepers can extrapolate for the others items on those lists.

TABLE 16.6 FINELY CRAFTED ARMOR

Armors	Gold Cost	AC	Weight	EV
Elf Mail Shirt	500	+5	10 lbs.	2
Dwarf Mail Shirt	500	+6	20 lbs.	3
Orc Mail Shirt	75	+3	30 lbs.	3
Elf Steel Breastplate	500	+6	10 lbs.	3
Dwarf Steel Breastplate	1,000	+8	20 lbs.	4
Orc Steel Breastplate	250	+4	40 lbs.	3
Elf Full Chain Suit	1,000	+9	30 lbs.	3
Dwarf Full Chain Suit	500	+8	40 lbs.	4
Orc Full Chain Suit	100	+7	50 lbs.	3
Elf Full Plate	2,000	+9	30 lbs.	4
Dwarf Full Plate	5,000	+10	45 lbs.	4
Orc Full Plate	750	+7	60 lbs.	3

Besides armor, the various races also make weapons differently.

TABLE 16.7 FINELY CRAFTED WEAPONS

Weapons	Gold Cost	DMG.	Weight	EV
Elf Battle Axe	15	1d6 +1	5 lbs.	1
Dwarf Battle Axe	30	2d4 +2	9 lbs.	1
Orc Battle Axe	5	1d6	8 lbs.	2
Elf Brass Knuckles	3	1d4	1 lbs.	1
Dwarf Steel Knuckles	5	1d6	2 lbs.	1
Orc Bronze Knuckles	1	1d4	3 lbs.	2
Elf War Hammer	10	1d8 +1	9 lbs.	2
Dwarf War Hammer	20	1d10 +1	10 lbs.	2
Orc War Hammer	8	1d8 +1	10 lbs.	2
Elf Long Spear	10	1d10	6 lbs.	2
Dwarf Long Spear	10	1d8 +2	9 lbs.	2
Orc Long Spear	2	1d6	8 lbs.	3
Elf Long Sword	20	1d10 +2	3 lbs.	3
Dwarf Long Sword	15	1d8 +1	5 lbs.	4
Orc Long Sword	10	1d8	6 lbs.	3

MAGICAL ITEMS

Castle keepers have a huge decision to make when it comes to magic and how much magic, in the way of items, to allow in the game or campaign world. Magic often sets the tone for the game or campaign as the amount of magic establishes whether the world is reliant upon it or whether it is something unique and special. Some CKs allow only one of every item, and foes don't keep these items in treasure hoards, but use them to protect themselves. Other CKs love magic in all of its forms and fill up their campaigns with lots of magical treasures. Early on in the Castle Keepers gaming experience, they need to decide just how much magic they want running around their world.

Gritty: In this fantasy world, only the higher-level characters display magic items and they never have more than one. Because of the rarity of magic, the CK may decide double the prices and experience for such things. Entire adventures can center on the search for four healing potions or a scroll of seven wizards spells. Clerics tend to be few in this type of campaign and wizards and illusionist spend their lives trying to fill up their spell books with difficult to find spells. The NPCs may have magical items, but these devices they either use or lock away in their treasure hoards.

Classic: The treasure tables in **M&T** reflect the classic style of game, rolls reflect the standard fantasy RPG. Every large town has some type of spell caster's guild where merchants may sell magic for high prices. The NPCs have magical items and use them in against the characters. These campaigns range in their usage of magic from a little to abundant.

Epic: This CK liberally adds more magic items to the standard treasures than the rules dictate. Cities, towns, and villages have their wizards, illusionists, and clerics and there are many quests with a magical theme to them as characters try to find *vorpal swords*, *lightning staves,* and *gloves of dexterity*.

USING MAGIC ITEMS

There are hosts of magic items listed in various publications, from **Monsters & Treasure** to the **Heart of Glass**. The vast majority of these items are usable by any class and any race. A *bag of holding*, *ring of invisibility*, *stone of alarm*; any class or race can use these items without penalty. Some items, however, seem to be very class specific, scrolls, wands, staves, and more particular, a *ring of spell storing*, for instance, all carry the stigma of use with only one type of class, generally spell using classes.

What happens when a fighter picks up a *wand of restoration* or what happens when a wizard picks up a *+2 broad sword* are generally dealt with by individual Castle Keepers. Each game is different as are worlds and campaigns and CKs should feel comfortable making these decisions at their tables. Magic is, of course, magic and can easily transgress into the realm of making the impossible possible so CKs should not be reluctant to bend rules that might otherwise seem natural. It is advised that items be dealt with on a case by case basis, however. The following are set guidelines and rules for those CKs and players who desire more concrete rulings and directions.

Potions: Anyone can use any potion and there are no saves against their use. The effect is immediate and overpowering; it allows the user to act as the spell of the same name. Concerning duration, range or any other effects of the potion the CK should assume, unless specifically known by the CK, that the potion has a level bonus equal to the minimum level required to create the potion/cast the spell. For example, trap the soul is a **9th level** spell. It requires an **18th level** wizard to create a potion of the same name. Therefore, assume that the potion in question would possess a level of 18. Take note that it requires a 9th level druid or cleric to create any potions and a **7th level** wizard or illusionist so that the minimum level of a potion is **9th** or **7th level** depending on who created it.

Scrolls: Scrolls are sheaves of parchment inscribed with magical spells. The spells themselves are written in a magical text and cannot be read by persons not of the appropriate class. For example, a wizard is the only one who can read the script on a wizard spell, while a cleric is the only one who can read the script on a cleric spell. Any spell caster that can read the script can cast the spell, no matter their level or hit dice. The spell itself is cast directly from the scroll. As noted in the **Players Handbook**, to cast a spell higher in level than the caster is allowed, they must make a successful intelligence check with the CL equal to that of the spell's level. However, unlike potions, the scroll's power is not connected with the level of its creator. Rather its power in duration, range and other effects is equal to the level of the caster, not the creator. A **1st level** wizard casting *fireball* does 1d6 points of damage; a **1st level** wizard casting *imprisonment* gives the creature he is attempting to imprison a CL 1 to overcome.

Note: If a character is using a device that allows them to read the magical script, such as a helm of comprehend languages, they may make an attempt to cast the spell, but they must make a successful ability check and they cast as a **1st level** caster.

Weapons: Anyone can use any weapon so long as they do not violate their alignment or other similar class restrictions such as a cleric with an edged weapon. Proficiency penalties do apply.

Armor & Shields: Anyone can use any armor. However, they cannot use any class abilities while so encumbered, unless the class is proficient in the use of that armor.

Miscellaneous Magic: These magic items are usable by almost any class and race. Alignment or other restrictions may apply.

Rings: Anyone can use a ring. If for some reason a ring's abilities are not outlined, the ring's level is equal to that of its creator. For rings that have specific spell like abilities, they are a minimum of **12th level** for clerics and druids, and **9th level** for wizards and illusionists. For each special ability add one level.

Rods, Staves & Wands: Rods, staves and wands are class specific items. They can only be used by the spell caster whose spells mimic the ability. Refer to **Table 16.8 Class Restrictions: Rod, Staff, Wand** for details. For those who wish to use one of these items but (usually) cannot, refer to **Using Class Based Items** below.

TABLE 16.8 CLASS RESTRICTIONS: ROD, STAFF, WAND

Item	Class
Rod of Absorption	W/I/C/D
Rod of Cancellation	C/D
Rod of Lordly Might	Any
Rod of Negation	C/W/D
Rod of Python	C
Rod of Rulership	Any
Rod of Thunder & Lightening	D
Rod of Withering	Any
Rod of Wonder	W/I
Staff of Abjuration	C/D/W/I
Staff of Conjuration	W/I
Staff of Evocation	W
Staff of Fire	W/I
Staff of Frost	W/I
Staff of Healing	C
Staff of Power	W/I
Staff of Resurrection	C/D/P
Staff of Woodlands	D/R
Wand of Color Spray	W/I
Wand of Darkness	C/D/W/I
Wand of Dispel Magic	C/C/W/I

In general, the item should equate to the class ability it mimics.

Cursed Items: Anyone can use any cursed item subject to normal class, race, and alignment restrictions and subject to the cursed item description.

Artifacts: Anyone can use any artifact subject to normal class, race, and alignment restrictions and subject to the artifact description. The *staff of the magi* can only be used by a wizard.

Using Class Based Magic Items

There are not many class based magic items, but for those that do exist there may come a time when a character attempts to use one that does not specifically belong to his class. Characters generally attempt such extreme feats for one of two reasons. First, they are attempting a last ditch effort to save the party or themselves and use the only thing left to them; a fighter using a *rod of negation* for example. For such acts of heroism some CKs may want to allow the character to have a fighting chance. Secondly some players may wish their characters to have the ability to access non-class based abilities, as magic items certainly allow them to do.

In either case, using class based items should be difficult and controlled. If the Castle Keeper does allow it, requiring the character to overcome a simple intelligence or wisdom check should serve nicely. The CB is 12 or 18 and the CL is equal to the casting level of the item in question. If they overcome the CC, they successfully use the item in question; if they fail the item does not work, but now must make a saving throw against crushing blow or explode. If it explodes, it does the damage as noted below in **Destruction of any Given Magic Item**.

Characters who use class based magic items do not gain experience for the item, though they do gain experience for the item's successful effects: monster death, negation, etc.

CHARGES & RECHARGING A MAGIC ITEM

Generally, it is a matter of casting the proper spell into a wand or staff. If it's a *paralysis* wand, the wizard throws *hold* spells or the like into the wand to charge it up. When there is a choice of spells as in a staff of power, the wizard gets away with throwing the least of the spells into the staff to add charges for any spells. Therefore, the wizard can cast *magic missile* spells into the staff and get *hold monster* charges from the magic.

When there is a rod or staff that has power but it isn't a specific spell, more research must be given to the recharging. In this case, an experienced sage or wizard who deals with magic must be hired to find the proper essence. A wizard of the 9th-level or higher will be necessary to add the charge unless it has a holy effect and then a cleric of the 12th-level or higher is needed. Very often, it will require crushing a patterned gem of some specific type and adding the chips and dust to a liquid infusion.

SERVICES

Every player character has something to offer in the way of services. Fighters offer their combat skills, wizards and illusionists offer their magical skills, clerics offer their divine abilities, and the rest of the character classes have special skills as well. There are ways to make it known that the PC is looking for work. Those include signs in the town square, contacting royalty or rich merchants, or talking themselves up in the local taverns.

TABLE 16.9 COST OF SERVICES

Character	Length of Service	Cost in gold
Wizard	single spell	100 per level of the spell
Wizard	working a week	100 per level of the wizard
Illusionist	single spell	75 per level of the spell
Illusionist	working a week	100 per level of the spell
Cleric	single spell	150 per level of the spell
Cleric	working a week	150 per level of the cleric
Fighter	working a week	75 per level of the fighter
All other classes	working a week	50 per character level

CRAFTING MAGIC

As characters continue to adventure and gain levels it is natural for them to desire to create their own silver, iron, or even magical weapons. Making copies of scrolls, concocting potions and the like help to further the game by allowing the characters access to magic treasure and effects without straining the adventuring world or the CKs planned adventure. This is covered in **Monster & Treasure**. What is presented here expands upon those guidelines.

Make note of the style of campaign. For gritty adventures the characters do not generally develop their own magical devices as doing so detracts from the rare nature of magic. It is even difficult to find NPCs that readily manufacture such items. Long quests that often end in failure can take the characters on many adventures, but magic is simply too rare. In classic campaigns, where magic is more plentiful the costs and time to do such work should be outrageous even for the creation of a dagger. Once again, the characters are going to have to adventure to find a crafter with experience in item creation. In an epic campaign, making magical items shouldn't be a problem, but the quest for the materials to make them should be a grand adventure.

SILVERING A WEAPON

Although putting silver on a weapon does not make it magical, such a weapon does have extra damaging effects on lycanthropes, undead, and other creatures. Creating silver weapons is a complicated process that involves more than plunging a sword into a molten vat of silver. Coating an item without the necessary skills creates an unbalanced weapon with a mass of silver temporarily sticking to the business end. Even in a gritty campaign, the characters can silver their weapons to make them more effective against some types of monsters. It is best to seek a professional. Every alchemist and weapon smith knows the process of silvering a weapon.

Step 1: Hire an alchemist and a weapon smith that has done the silvering work before. Refer to **Chapter 4, NPCs**, referencing **Tables 4.1-4.3**.

Step 2: Pay them each half of the agreed upon price and give the alchemist an extra 100 silver coins.

Step 3: Select the desired weapon. The alchemist melts down the coins and purifies the silver to make sure there are no impurities which generally lessen the effect of the silver.

Step Four: The weapon smith etches a wide silver pattern into the weapon in order to maintain its balance. The player may choose the pattern of the etching, by naming the blade or paying homage to a fallen comrade, etc.

Step Five: The finished weapon does double damage versus lycanthropes and a +4 in damage versus undead.

Step Six: As with any item, the silver on the weapon suffers from wear and tear. Require the character to periodically make a saving throw for constant use, or massive blow, or whatever the circumstances dictate that might damage the silver (see above, **Chapter 3 Equipment**).

CREATING HOLY WATER

To create holy water requires a cleric or druid with access to a temple, church, grove, or any place that is blessed by the deity of a religion. The cleric can cast *bless water* on any water brought into the grounds and placed into a holy cup, bowl, and grail, passed through a holy cloth or some similar ritual; the ritual must involve some previously blessed item. When the water is set in the vessel or passed through it the cleric or druid channels the good will of his deity into the water, sanctifying it.

The channeling exhausts the cleric and for every pint of water they bless they must rest for 4 hours. For further notes on creating holy water see **Spell Behavior: Bless Water** in **Chapter 2**.

Temples and the like rarely give away holy water, usually only under extreme circumstances. The Castle Keeper must define these circumstances. Otherwise, clerics and holy places award holy water for donations of at least 30gp.

Evil clerics and druids also make unholy water. In this process, they bleed into any type of water and scream the name of their deity so that the liquid vibrates and fills with power. As with holy water, the process must involve an unholy sanctum and some cursed item. Touching this unholy fluid during the process also destroys the harmful effects of the liquid.

CREATING NEW SPELLS

Any spell caster can create a new spell if they spend the time and gold. However, it does take time away from their adventuring. If the spell caster has the gold, they usually hire out the work to another magic user. Some debate will have to go on between the Player and the Castle Keeper to establish if this spell is just an extension of another spell or a new spell. New spells should be more difficult to make and cost more. A great deal of interesting role-playing can be had when the CK tells the player what type of materials they require in order to cast this new spell. If a wizard wanted to make a new *lightning bolt* spell, telling the wizard they have to use a sliver from a *javelin of lightning* sets up an entirely new adventure, sending them on a mission to find such a weapon.

PART 3: THE SIEGE ENGINE

Creating a spell is not easy and magic users suffer any number of problems while doing so, from failed components, lack of concentration, interruptions, etc. Each time they attempt to create a new spell, refer to **Table 16.11 Creating New Spells** to determine if the attempt was successful. If successful, the character is able to write the new spell into their spell book. If the attempt fails, they must abandon the spell altogether or if they try again they must start from scratch, spending the necessary money to do so.

Characters must be at least **10th level** to attempt to create new spells. Characters cannot create spells that they cannot cast, for instance a **15th level** spell caster cannot create a **9th level** spell.

Table 16.10 Creating Spells Based Upon Existing Spells Use the standard Siege Engine mechanic in order to determine the success or failure of new spell creation. The Player should make the roll, adding level and attribute bonus to any attempt. The **CB** is the **Challenge Base**, which is always 12. Determine the level of spell that the CK and Player have agreed the new minted spell will be and whether the spell is based upon an existing spell or a new spell. If it is a new spell based upon existing spells consult **Table 16.10,** and if it is a new spell consult **Table 16.11**. This determines the challenge level (CL) and the minimum cost (GP), which is the amount of gold pieces the character must spend to create the spell. The time in weeks is the time it normally takes to research and make the spell.

TABLE 16.10 CREATING SPELLS BASED UPON EXISTING SPELLS

CB	Spell Level	CL	Minimum Cost GP*	Time in Weeks †
12	0	1	200	1
12	1st	2	400	2
12	2nd	4	800	4
12	3rd	6	1,600	6
12	4th	8	3,200	8
12	5th	10	6,400	10
12	6th	12	12,800	12
12	7th	14	25,600	14
12	8th	16	51,200	16
12	9th	18	102,400	18

TABLE 16.11 CREATING NEW SPELLS

CB	Spell Level	CL	Minimum Cost* †	Time in Weeks †
12	0	2	1,000	2
12	1st	3	2,000	3
12	2nd	6	4,000	6
12	3rd	9	8,000	9
12	4th	12	16,000	12
12	5th	15	32,000	15
12	6th	18	64,000	18
12	7th	21	128,000	21
12	8th	24	256,000	24
12	9th	27	512,000	27

*If the character spends twice this amount, they receive a +1 bonus to the check. Spending four times the amount earns a maximum of a +2 bonus to the check. This accounts for hiring more assistants, purchasing better equipment and more pure components. The CK may choose to increase the spell cost beyond the values given here for a variety of reasons. See **Monsters & Treasure**, **Calculating Magic Item Gold Piece Value** for more details.

† If characters spend double the normal time in attempting to create the spell, they gain a +1 to their attribute check.

EXAMPLE: The Crimson Wizard of the Dragon Slayers group has always wanted a spell that allowed him to blast out a lightning bolt without it bouncing all over the walls of the area and possibly killing him. After consulting with the CK, they both determine that the spell he has in mind is a **5th level** spell. Crimson hires a **10th level** wizard to do the work for him. He tells the hired wizard he should take 30 weeks to research the spell (gaining a +1 to his check). The wizard wants to charge 32,000 gold for the time to make the spell and Crimson gives the wizard 64,000 gold; double his asking price (another +1 on the check) The wizard needs to make a successful intelligence check of 27 in order to successfully create the spell. His 17 intelligence is a prime, making the challenge base 12 +15 for the spell level. The wizard is a **10th level** wizard, and with his

level and attribute bonuses his modifier is +12. He receives a +1 bonus for double the minimum cost and an additional +1 bonus for double the time, making his final modifier +14. On the dice he rolls a 16, adding his modifier to it to come up with a 30. He has successfully created the spell.

MAKING SPELL SCROLLS

The making of spell scrolls is a simple process for every spell caster. Once again, it requires time and often characters hire out the work to another spell caster with plenty of time on their hands. Use the following table for creating a specific spell on a scroll or for establishing a base cost of having a magical scroll created by an NPC.

Table 16.12 Writing Spells On Scrolls charts the cost of writing spells onto scrolls. The spell level is the level of the spell the character is writing on the scroll. **Material cost** for the materials is for the specially treated parchments and ink as well as any items needed in writing the spell. **Hireling** is the minimum amount a second party wizard charges for writing the scroll for the character; this is in addition to **Material Cost**. The **Time in Hours** it takes to cast the spell into the scroll and the writing of the words to make the magic work. This does not reflect the amount of time required to rest while making a magic scroll. For every 12 hours a mage works, they must rest for 12 hours.

A magic user must be at least **7th level** to write scrolls.

TABLE 16.12 WRITING SPELLS ON SCROLLS

Spell Level	Material Cost	Hireling	Time in hours
0	150gp	10gp/hr	12
1	150gp	12gp/hr	12
2	250gp	13gp/hr	24
3	350gp	14gp/hr	36
4	450gp	15gp/hr	48
5	550gp	16gp/hr	60
6	650gp	17gp/hr	72
7	750gp	18gp/hr	84
8	950gp	19gp/hr	96
9	950gp	20gp/hr	108

MAKING POTIONS

The creation of potions is alchemist's work. With a simple turn over of gold, the alchemist gathers the materials and mixes those materials under the proper configurations. The cost of any created potion is reduced by 20% if the characters are bright enough to provide fresh main ingredients for the potion they want to buy. The basic time it takes to make a potion is parallel to the cost in gold. If it cost 300 gold for the potion it takes the right ingredients and the right time. Table **16.13 Potion Ingredients** highlights possible ingredients for existing potions in **Monsters & Treasure**.

TABLE 16.13 POTION INGREDIENTS

Potions Ranked by Costs	Time for Casting	Main Ingredient
Bless (oil) - 300	High Noon	Stirred with a silver holy symbol
Cure light wounds - 300	Sun Rise	ginseng root
Endure elements - 300	High Noon	goldenrod stems
Pass without Trace – 300	Full Moon	dust from a druid's crypt
Protection from Alignment - 300	High Noon	holy water
Sanctuary - 300	High Noon	dust from the steps of a lawful temple
Shield of Faith +2 - 300	Full Moon	opal chips
Spider Climb - 300	Quarter Moon	web from large spider
Aid - 400	High Noon	silver filings
Blur – 400	High Noon	jaguar tail
Delay Poison – 400	High Noon	asp fangs
Invisibility – 400	Dark Night	sylph hair
Levitation – 400	High Noon	hummingbird heart
Remove Paralysis – 400	High Noon	eel intestine
Clairaudience/ Clairvoyance - 500	1st day of year	giant bat eyes
Gaseous form – 500	Dark Night	vampire toe
Haste – 500	Dark Night	wolverine heart
Nondetection - 500	Dark Night	white rabbit lung
Remove Blindness/ deafness – 500	High Noon	temple holy water
Remove Curse – 500	High Noon	lawful alter dust
Remove Disease – 500	High Noon	giant rat liver
Tongues – 500	Full Moon	mastiff ear
Neutralize Poison – 600	High Noon	druid glade oak bark
Cure Critical Wounds – 700	Vernal Equinox	blackthorn leaves
Giant Strength – 700	Spring Months	giant eyelashes
Restoration – 700	Spring Months	vampire tongue
Heal – 800	Winter Months	winter orchids
Trap the Soul – 1,100	Autumnal Equinox	blue diamond
Longevity – 12,000	Summer Solstice	gold star sapphire

CREATING NEW POTIONS

The act of creating a potion requires expensive material components. The cost of these components is 200gp per level of the spell turned into a potion. Additionally, a well-stocked alchemical laboratory is necessary for the concocting process. The cost of materials and goods for this laboratory is 1,000gp per level of the spell type created. For example, to create potions of **5th level** spell-like qualities, the person creating the spell must have a lab costing 5,000gp. This is a cumulative cost, furnishing a lab for **1st level** potions costs 1,000gp, and upgrading that lab

to manage 2nd **level** potions as well costs 2,000gp. A lab that can brew potions of levels 1 through 5 would cost a total of 15,000gp.

There are times when the characters may want to hire an expert to create potions. If so, they must be able to find the appropriate hireling (see **Chapter 4** above). Assuming such a skilled person is present consult the following **Table 16.14 Hiring Magic Users to Create New Potions**. The potion may fail at the outset and the character is required to make a successful intelligence check in order to successfully create the potion. Failure to do so means the spell fails. The intelligence check is adjusted by the level and attribute bonus of the one attempting to fabricate the potion, i.e. if the character has hired an NPC to create the potion the character rolls using the NPC's level, prime, and attribute bonus. Fresh ingredients increase the chances of success. If these are available, add +1 to the intelligence check.

The CB is always 12. Add to that the CL on the chart below to arrive at the CC, the number required to successfully create the potion. The cost is the Material cost, plus the hireling's rate of pay times the number of hours required to concoct the potion.

TABLE 16.14 HIRING MAGIC USERS TO CREATE NEW POTIONS

CB	Potion Level	CL	Material Cost (gp)	Hireling*	Time in Hours
12	0	2	200	lvl x 20/hr	1
12	1st	3	200	lvl x 20/hr	1
12	2nd	6	400	lvl x 40/hr	2
12	3rd	9	600	lvl x 60/hr	3
12	4th	12	800	lvl x 80/hr	4
12	5th	15	1000	lvl x 100/hr	5
12	6th	18	1200	lvl x 120/hr	6
12	7th	21	1400	lvl x 140/hr	7
12	8th	24	1600	lvl x 160/hr	8
12	9th	27	1800	lvl x 180/hr	9

*The level of the magic user determines how much they charge.

Example: A 7th **level** wizard creating a 3rd **level** potion would charge 7 x 60 =420gp per hour. To create the 3rd **level** spell into a potion would cost 1,260gp. After paying the appropriate sum the Player rolls an intelligence check for the hireling. For the potion to work, the Player must roll a 21 or better (CB of 12 + 9 challenge level). The Player rolls an 11. The CK adds the hireling's level (7) to his attribute bonus (+1) and the roll resulting in a 19. The potion does not take.

PURCHASING MAGIC ITEMS

Purchasing magic items is rare in **Castles & Crusades**. The game is one of heroic adventure, whose end game is often the destruction of evil, plundering the wealth of the ancients and the acquisition of exotic treasure. Gaining a treasure by purchase is a little counterintuitive to the whole concept. However, characters often need items and Castle Keepers desire to have them more readily available for settings/games are built around magic as a common place item. In these circumstances, it does not hurt to have some ready made guidelines to follow.

Each magic item in the **Monsters & Treasure** comes with a price listing. This is the baseline cost of any item. However, finding magic for sale is rare and very dependent on the market conditions. Those who own the items generally know their value and charge the characters accordingly. To determine the value of items not listed, consult the **Calculating Magic Item Gold Piece Cost** section of **Monsters & Treasure**.

Any purchase of an item should be 10-20% greater than the value listed.

DESTROYING MAGIC

Magic items are rarely destroyed, but at times monsters, events, or even characters facilitate the destruction of a magic item. When an item comes under such stress that it might be destroyed, use the rules outlined in **Monsters & Treasure**. If an item should fail its save, it is entirely up to the Castle Keeper as to whether the magic within it unleashes a wave of destructive power. This is often an on the spot judgment call, instantly destroying a magic item and unleashing its power on a party of characters can bring a game to a rapid halt. On the other hand, characters often attempt to save themselves by unleashing the power of the item in question, knowing full well that its destruction may save the party.

Consider the type of game played and the commonality of magic in the game. If magic is rare then wantonly destroying items might not be in the favor of the game. If magic is common then unleashing its power might be more desirable. But whatever the case, never underestimate the power of magic items beyond the simple mechanics. Unleashing a blast of eldritch sorcery that damages the party but destroys the enemy is a beautiful set piece event that makes adventurers into legends.

If an item is destroyed and its power unleashed, the character carrying the item must make a successful dexterity save against the level of the item in question. If they fail, the blast strikes them every bit as much as it does anyone else. A successful save reduces the impact damage by half, or any ill effects the blast has, cut in half as well.

To determine the level of a magic item, examine its powers and correlate them to the equivalent spell levels. For items with several spell-like abilities the level number stacks. Each bonus the item has earns it a equal level bonus. The Castle Keeper must use their best judgment to determine magic item levels as each game is different.

BREAKING A STAFF OR WAND ON PURPOSE

The damage done by a broken staff or wand is a function of the number of charges in the object, and not the destructive power of the spells inside. The command word of the item and a desire to break the item works the magic and a ten-foot sphere

erupts, centered on the item. Every charge left in the device deals 1d6 points of damage. For instance, a forty-nine charge *wand of paralysis* breaks doing 49d6 points of damage to anyone within that area of effect.

DESTRUCTION OF ANY MAGIC ITEM

Most miscellaneous magic items are difficult to break. Along the same lines, nothing happens to most items when they do break. Their magical energies don't usually explode. Breaking these items is often very difficult, except in the case of a *portable hole* or a *bag of holding*. With these two items, a sharp blade or spike placed in the container can rip the inter-dimensional fabric of the inside of the item. Using great force on the outside of the item, the following items cause their own problems:

TABLE 16.15 DESTROYING MAGIC ITEMS

Item	Damage or Effect (20 foot sphere)
Bag of Holding	10d10
Cloak of Displacement	12d10
Efreeti Bottle	One Enraged Efreeti
Ioun Stone	20d12
Mirror of Life Trapping	Trapped Souls
Necklace of Fireballs	Fireball missiles left unexploded
Orb of Storms	10d6 in lightning
Portable Hole	50d6

Explosions happen when a *bag of holding* is placed in a *portable hole* or the reverse happens. The multi-dimensions battle each other causing the bag and hole to explode with god-like force.

CHAPTER 17 – IRON & SULFUR: COMBAT

Combat is often the matrix around which the **Castles & Crusades** game centers. This is the moment when the heroes rise against the monster, when good must overcome evil, and the characters test their mettle against that of their foe. But combat is more than a simple resolution of conflict. Combat is the single greatest, multipurpose tool the Castle Keeper possesses. Through combat conflict can be resolved. When the characters meet the ogre they can slay him, liberating the village that he terrorized. But also, combat can bring a level of control to the game that no other CK function can. When the party is scattered throughout the forest, the CK can use combat to force the characters back into a functioning group. Furthermore, disinterested players are easiest to bring back to the table when confronted with a raging battle that they cannot avoid. But fighting these combats can be time consuming and often lead to acrimonious debates between players and Castle Keepers. The **Players Handbook** goes far in settling many of the basic disputes and establishing a play book to effectively play through the combat rounds. Here we expand upon those rules with a series of options, rules, and general guidelines on how to run more effective combat rounds, when to discard and regard rules, how to tailor the rule to your mode of play. All this to bring the taste of iron with a wash of sulfur to your gaming table.

Castle Keepers and players should read over the following guidelines and determine which of them serves the purposes in the game they are playing. Some may find that these do not fit the theme of the overall game whereas others may find them useful in certain situations. Understand the rules before applying them, particularly the overarching effect using these rules may have on the game. For instance, using critical hits may seem like a good idea to characters as they have a 1 in 20 chance of doing catastrophic damage, but they should be reminded that the monsters are allowed critical hits as well and, on average, since monster encounters usually involve more monsters and less characters, the odds of one of those monsters rolling a critical hit are greater than the character.

THE EBB AND FLOW OF BATTLE

As has been previously discussed, creating an exciting mood is a key component to running a fun game. A key component of that mood is the battles through which the characters must suffer. A well constructed battle is both exciting and gripping and can capture the attention of the players and keep them excited about the game for a long time after. In order to have a fun battle, one must control the combat round with an iron fist. This control should not be equated to breaking out a series

of tables, charts and rules in order to control the combat, what it means is that the Castle Keeper not only must pay attention to the players, what they are doing, and how they are doing it, but also must keep the pace going in a solid, steady flow, apply enough risk to be challenging, and attempt to electrify the players with descriptions that make them take notice. The CK's role here is very much like a conductor, they must guide all parts and watch for a section that may need more direction and if needed, apply it.

BALANCE

Creating a balanced encounter is a challenging, but important, part of creating a successful encounter and combat. The CK must avoid pitching characters into combats that are impossible as immediate annihilation isn't particularly fun. On the other hand, characters that cut through a monster in a matter of seconds might joke and think they are having fun, but the residual memories of the combat fade when compared to the heart gripping moments of battle with a creature that gives the characters a true run for their money.

The ability to find the necessary balance often comes with experience. Attempts to create a formula for the Castle Keeper to follow and quickly create an encounter offer more problems than such a formula would solve. For instance, monster hit points widely vary. A chimera has 9 (d10) HD; conceivably this monster's hit points can range from 9 to 90. The creature's damage and abilities may still be high, but it is entirely conceivable that two **1st level** fighters could slay a chimera with two well placed arrows. The variables do not of course end here. Different characters have different abilities and the range is very broad in the number of hit points they have, the attribute bonuses, weapons they carry, spells they have memorized, and magic items they have. The variables are too many and almost impossible to set down barring a monstrous formula that goes against the entire spirit of the **C&C** game.

It is possible to establish challenge levels for monsters but such a thing would lead to more problems than it solves as the challenge level cannot in and of itself capture the number of variables that impact encounters.

When creating an encounter, there are a few generalized pieces of advice a CK should take into consideration.

- Have a clear idea of the number of characters, their levels, hit points, extraordinary abilities (abilities of 13 and over), spells, and magic items. Take note on whether the party is heavy on fighters or magic users, healing capabilities, etc. In short, know the party dynamics. This information is not secret information and you need it to properly adjudicate an encounter.
- As a very general rule, the monster should be at least equal to the character's combined levels. Making the monsters a little stronger is okay, as players have a slight advantage over monsters in skills and because they have extraordinary abilities. The monster's hit dice roughly equates to character levels, and this is a good baseline from which to work. Note what the monster's extra abilities are. Some have many attacks, spell-like abilities, etc. These can tip the balance radically if a monster can wipe out an entire party with one spell.
- A very specific thing to look out for is the spell-like abilities of a monster in relation to the monster's hit dice, and compared to the character's levels. For example, a chimera has 9 hit dice, therefore any saving throws against its breath weapon or any of its special abilities have an automatic CL of 9. This is added to the Challenge Base of 12 or 18. Thus, the characters would need to make saving throws of 21 (CB 12 + CL 9) if prime, and 27 (CB 18 + CL 9) if not prime, should the chimera use its breath weapon or its other special abilities. Those are hard target numbers to make and may result in the instantaneous death of one or both characters. Saving against a similar attack from a creature with 2 hit dice would not be as difficult. If the monster's hit dice is roughly equal to that of the player's levels it help's to establish some balance.

The Balance Key

The key to running a balanced encounter is not a set of rules, but the CK's ability to **adjust the rules** as he plays through the game. This is a critical departure from most systems as running a successful **C&C** combat does not rely upon a rules set per se, but rather the CK's ability to alter the rules on the fly and in the course of the combat. This departure has to take place during the combat and is not, nor can it be, a part of the preparation process.

During the course of play, if the encounter seems unbalanced and the characters are being overwhelmed, drop the monster's AC, HD, or hit points. Any of these can bring the encounter back into balance. The opposite is true as well. If the characters are fighting the chimera and it is obviously going to die too quickly because its hit points are very low, give it a few more hit points.

Running the Combat

Once combat begins, it is important to keep it flowing. Control the flow of information. Discourage people from shouting numbers out of sequence. This most commonly happens in the initiative phase of combat as people are ready to rock and start shouting out their numbers. Doing this creates a jumble of information. It's best to start at one point on the table and ask each person their roll until you go around the table, making note of their rolls.

Move through the initiative rounds quickly. Having determined who is going first, ask them what action they want to take and allow them to do it, or quickly explain why they cannot. If done quickly and efficiently it allows for more room for the player and CK to become involved. The player can describe the type of swing he is aiming at, shout battle cries and any other number of reactions. The CK can compliment it all by describing the effect of the action. If the rules section, in this case the actual dice

rolling and adjudicating (did they hit or not, or did their action succeed or not), is kept to a minimum then there is more room for descriptions and role playing the battle.

Role playing the battle should be encouraged, allowing characters to shout back and forth, or even better, hurl verbal attacks at their enemies. This latter is a wonderful opportunity for the CK to respond by having the role played attack actually impact the battle itself.

Example: Angrod the dwarf finds himself in the midst of a band of orcs fighting for his life.

Player: "I work myself up into a battle rage and shout at the orcs 'Come for me and Die!' I stand as tall as I can and jut my chest out. Angrod's face fills with rage and hate. I try to look maddened!"

CK: "The effect of your battle cry is electric. The orcs seem momentarily disconcerted and off their game, their attacks a little more uncertain." The CK subtracts one from each orc's to-hit roll.

In this example, it is not necessary to tell the players that the orcs suffered a -1 on the to-hit rolls. It doesn't hurt for them to know that the orcs suffered some type of penalty as that knowledge, that their battle cries (role playing) can affect the outcome of the battle and encourages more role playing.

Five Seconds

Tamping down the rules is doubly important if you have more than three or four people at the table. Make certain everyone knows that they have a limited time to act or react in their round. A good rule of thumb is to give them five slow seconds to announce their character's reaction. If it goes much beyond that they lose their turn, and must go at the end of the round. Mitigate this for new players who may not be completely aware of all the actions they can take.

Save it for Later

When questions about rules come up and a discussion seems imminent, it is best to move through it quickly. If a rule is it unclear or uncertain, or you and the player are not sure how to use the rule, drop it and move on. Address the offending rule after the combat. If the action the player decides to take has the potential to save the party from certain doom, the CK should usually make a one time exception of the action and rule in favor of the player. As soon as the combat is over, allow for long discussions and dissemination of the rules material and set it in stone for future use. It is best to give the players a little leeway in order to maintain the ebb and flow of the combat rather than ruling on an action whose absence may have cost the party members their characters.

In this same vein, adjust the combat when needed. Do not allow the dice to rule the combat's flow. If you need to add a few hit points to the ogre in the encounter, do so. If you need to subtract a few, do that as well.

Describe & React

Getting down good descriptions is perhaps the best way to control the ebb and flow of the battle. If rules discussions are constantly pummeling the combat or if slow reactions keep non-active players disinterested, bringing in crushing blows to equipment and to characters is always a good way to keep the mood high or to push it in that direction. It is not necessary to actually script out long Howardesque prose to do this. In fact, overly long descriptions, no matter how well crafted, can cause the opposite of the desired effect and bore the players into troublesome behavior. If prose is not your thing, concentrate on equipment. If characters see their equipment being broken, chopped in half, dulled, and generally destroyed, it focuses their attention like nothing else except for their own hit point loss. Any additional descriptive text just adds to the overall effect of the combat.

It's also important to react quickly to player reactions. There is almost no telling how a player is going to use their character abilities or what they are going to try. The sky is not the limit, but only their imaginations. Give each attempt its just due, whether it be for or against it. Usually anything a character attempts deserves some type of ability check. But avoid doing long winded discussions about why a character could or could not do something. Let the dice decide how unlikely it is, after, of course, putting a judicious Challenge Level on the attempt.

All of this is part of role playing the combat, the safest and easiest way to run a mood setting and fast paced combat.

COMBAT BASICS

For a complete discussion of the combat round, refer to the **Players Handbook**. However, in order to avoid too much cross referencing of books, the following is a quick refresher of the essentials.

Combat occurs in the combat round. The combat round is 10 seconds long. There are 6 rounds in 1 minute. Therefore in the course of 1 minute of combat, six combat rounds occur.

Combat begins with all combatants rolling an initiative roll on a d10. The highest roll goes first. The winner of the initiative roll takes their action first, whether this action is an attack or a character ability check, such as sneaking behind the enemy or casting a spell. The person with the next highest roll follows, and the third highest roll after that, in descending order until everyone has taken an action. The d10 allows for an orderly process of actions as some actions participants make take less than a full round. The combat continues until some type of resolution occurs, whether the death of one or more of the participants or the surrender of one or more.

Many things affect combat or can change the outcome of what might seem an otherwise decided encounter. These include initiative, armor class of the combatants, types of hits, terrain they are fighting in, objectives of the combatants, etc.

THE COMBAT ROUND

The combat round is technically a ten second interval. During this ten seconds of time, many actions are taken to include numerous attacks and defensive moves, parries, feints and thrusts etc. It is assumed that during the round the characters are very busy undertaking offensive and defensive actions. They are not static, awaiting an attack; everyone is acting.

When altering or developing rules, the combat round is really an indeterminate length of time during which the characters act. It is important to remember this when developing rules. The round could be very short, perhaps a few seconds, or long, lasting up to a minute. It makes little real difference as the round is used to resolve conflicts and generally individual actions are assumed in the whole. So for example, when a character says, "I swing," it really means they are bending their efforts to attacking their opponent that round and the to-hit roll and possible damage is a result of various attacks, one of which, or several of which, deal damage.

When developing rules for **Castles & Crusades**, try to restrict actions that can be undertaken to those that might occur within a 5-15 second interval. A broad range of actions can occur during this time frame and it helps to actually count out 15 seconds when deciding whether to take the action. One can also expand the combat round to take a minute. During this time a broad range of action can be undertaken. As the damage received and attacks are generic in nature and not reflective of single actions, it really does not matter. What does matter is what can occur during that time frame.

Initiative

The action within each round takes place over a 10 second period. Combatants draw weapons, attack, and parry, cast spells, dodge or take any other combat maneuver that may seem appropriate. The round is broken up to allow for an orderly progression of events. Rolling the d10 for initiative establishes the order of response from each player and the CK. The order of events is essential as someone with a high initiative roll might actually slay an opponent long before that opponent gets to roll.

Example: Angrod rolls a d10 for initiative and comes up with a 7. The orc he is fighting rolls and comes up with a 3. Angrod takes his swing, hits and slays the orc. The orc is dead before he could take his swing.

For this reason, initiative can be extremely important, especially where spells are concerned as one spell that goes off before the combatants react can potentially kill or disable all the combatants on the opposite side, and sometimes all the friends as well.

STATIC VS. DYNAMIC INITIATIVE: Characters and monsters should roll initiative each round in order to create a dynamic gaming environment. This allows a greater variance at the table because it constantly shakes up the order of who goes when. This in turn keeps characters focused on the combat round as they do not know when their turn is going to come up next. Dynamic initiative can be chaotic as characters begin to work through other rounds and playing into the next round. This is easy enough to control by beginning play at the CK's right and working around the table. Anytime two or more characters are attacking the same opponent, the order should be skipped and those two allowed to act in concert.

Dynamic initiative requires a great deal more attention from the Castle Keeper. They must be prepared for very fluid movements as one character may win initiative and intervene on another's combat, and so forth. But this in turn adds to the dynamic nature of this type of initiative rolling.

Static initiative calls for the characters to roll one initiative roll at the beginning of the combat round and that determines their turn in all the remaining combat rounds. Though orderly, this approach allows too much time for players to sit and wait for when they are allowed to take an action. With no chance of a shake up in the round, especially in high level combats where rounds may take 5 or more minutes per character, the static player sits for much too long without doing anything.

The d6: Some prefer to use the d6 for initiative. This is a layover from earlier games but does have some validity in the *C&C* universe. Using the d6 assumes that there is a great deal more action going on in each individual round. If using this method it is important to note that the combat round does not change in any way, there are still 10 seconds in a combat round. Use of the d6, though nostalgic adds nothing to the fun of the game.

THE ACTION

The combat round is an extraordinarily complex and busy time for the characters. Each round consists of a host of actions and reactions. In mechanics, it boils down to a few simple throws of the dice, but in the actual round itself, a massive battle of life and death rages between hero and monster. The role playing, and fun of the game, surfaces in this action. The opportunities to heighten the game and send the players on wild roller coaster rides is prevalent for the CK. The combat round is a role-playing gem, thus do not assume that Angrod is able to swing once a round, but rather his **one** swing a round is actually several blows and parries during which a host of orcs, cut, thrust, parry, bashed their mad attack against his own.

ROLE PLAYING COMBAT

Before embarking on a system of rules to govern the wide variety of extenuating circumstances that affect combat, consider role playing through them. Once hard and fast rules are applied and become the norm of the game, it is difficult to remove them. Combat has an immeasurable impact on the role playing game. In combat, characters can be killed and removed from the game permanently. They can lose their favorite weapons or equipment. On the other side of that coin, they can slay the ancient dragon and open his hoard to plunder, thereby gaining riches beyond their wildest imaginings.

PART 3: THE SIEGE ENGINE

Amongst the many things that players and CK's control, combat is one of the most important and something players attempt, either overtly, covertly or subconsciously to control. Allowing this control to leave the CK's domain weakens the ability of the CK to tell the story. More rules are good for guidance and clarification, but it is advisable to use them sparingly and only after understanding the needs of the table and the game. Implementing a wide set of rules encourages players to learn them and to use them, this in turn creates a crutch that many players fall back upon when things are going poorly but one that when used consistently can more often than not make things go poorly for the character. A CK can lose an infinite number of orcs to no real effect; the player loss is only one.

Role playing through combat requires only that the Castle Keeper engage the players and hence their characters in the actual combat through descriptive text. Use the terrain, weather, the critical hit, the called shot, or which ever extended circumstance or circumstances applies as flavor text. Setting the circumstance up through descriptions and then reacting to their actions with reasonable commentary can easily engage the players and is done without reference to any rules other than those generalized rules established in the **Players Handbook**. Using favorable or descriptive text allows for the CK to maintain the all important flow of combat, without referencing charts or tables, and only requires an active imagination on both the player's and CK's part.

Example: Angrod plunges into the orcs, hefting his shield high to drive them back and swinging his axe at the nearest orc. Despite Angrod's ferocity, the battle is one-sided as there are just too many orcs. The player rolls a natural 20, a critical hit. Angrod is **4th level** with 16 strength and a +1 battle axe. Angrod rolls a 6 for damage, for a total of 9 points of damage. The CK knows this automatically kills the 1 HD orc and that Angrod has dispatched his foe; however, far better to use this opportunity to direct the blow toward driving the combat even harder, so the CK relates: "So great is the blow and so perfect the timing that Angrod's axe cleaves through the orc he aimed at and leaving a trail of blood and death behind it drives into the orc standing next to him. Both orcs topple to the ground, sprawled at your feet."

What the CK has accomplished here was to even the combat out a little more, and simultaneously boost the players confidence of success and made the game all the more fun.

Here are several examples of role playing through combat which can affect either the character or monster, with the caveat, of course, that some of these effects cannot affect certain types of characters or monsters. For example a chimera cannot lose a piece of equipment.

- Slipping and falling in difficult terrain.
- Killing more enemies than one.
- Dropping weapon.
- Knocking opponent down.
- Breaking equipment.
- Losing equipment.
- Hitting Friend.
- Stepping into the ruined ribcage of an enemy and getting the foot stuck.

Cautionary Notes

It is easy to trip up when role playing combat. Sometimes even the most veteran CKs allow one thing to pass for one character, but not the same thing for a different character. The heat of the imaginary battle is often thick and the CK has many things to control and over which they have to keep track. Move through the mishap with the same descriptive text.

Example: Javiel leaps into the battle with Angrod, attacking the orcs. Immediately the player rolls a natural 20. The odds are beginning to even and the battle is only at its nadir of excitement. The CK needs a few more orcs to hold on for a few more rounds to allow Javiel to participate. "Your blade carves one down completely. He falls at your feet!"

Player: "Wait a minute? Can't I kill two orcs with my natural 20 like Angrod did?"

CK: "The orcs are moving fast and you know immediately that they are a little disconcerted by your joining the combat. So, no, your blade can't cut through two as there are not two standing close enough."

As with any aspect of role playing, be careful to not overdo it. Too often CKs continue to drone on well after the characters have already been drawn into the combat and the mood is set. A long description is often counterproductive to capturing that all important mood. Keep it short and keep it graphic.

ADDING TO THE ROLE PLAYING

Sometimes role playing through combats is best served by some hard and fast simple rules. Perhaps the CK needs a little more direction. Presented here are several rules systems, none of which are hard and fast rules for the Castle Keeper to use. Pick and choose, use and discard as each game requires.

The Critical Hit

A critical hit is defined as any unmodified score of 20 on the d20 "to hit" roll. A critical miss is similar to the critical hit, but occurs on a result of 1 on the d20. Both critical hits and misses apply to the CK as well as the players. Colloquially referred to as "crits", it is not to view crits as special rolls, so out of the norm that they must have some effect beyond that of normal combat. There are no hard and fast rules when a crit is rolled, and it is up to the Castle Keeper and the players to determine which method is best for the game they are playing, if any.

The Castle Keeper must make the players aware of the pitfalls of using critical hit rules. There are often more monsters than there

are characters, especially in mass combat where humanoids are involved. Those numerous foes each roll a to-hit on the d20. The law of averages works in their favor for scoring a critical hit, simply because there are more of them. Characters can't sustain the critical hits as the orcs can, nor score as many. As exciting as the critical can be, it's dangerous when playing against these odds. Use the following critical hit options with care, and make certain the players know the danger to their characters.

The basic rule for all critical systems listed below is that a natural 1 is always a miss and a natural 20 is always a hit. The only exceptions are monsters that are immune to normal weapons and the attacker is using one. Any of these options work for a simple approach to the critical hit. These are, of course, only options and the CK should adjust or alter them as fits their individual game.

Total success may have a variety of meanings. In combat it typically means extra damage. For a saving throw, it obviously means success, even if the save could not have been passed in any other way. For a siege check, it could mean that the challenge succeeds, even if the challenge is beyond the powers or abilities of the characters.

Of course, nothing can be quite as heart wrenching as needing that natural 20 to save your character from certain annihilation, and rolling a natural 1 instead! The natural 1 is often considered the antithesis of the natural 20. Most typically a 1 is a 1 and is in general determined to be an unsuccessful roll. As is the case among many gaming groups and their various house rules governing the Natural 20, the Natural 1 may add some extra penalty to the character as a way of adding insult to injury: Again this depends on some form of agreed upon play between the CK and the players. One thing that is universally agreed upon is that a natural 1 in a combat situation is a definite miss!

Listed here are a variety of methods for enhancing the dice by giving more value to a 1 or a 20, as naturally rolled in game.

Option 1: This is the simplest method of doing critical hits and fumbles. When a to-hit roll results in a natural 20, a critical hit is scored. The weapon does maximum damage +1d4, +strength modifier (if they have one) to the opponent. On a natural 1, the character drops their weapon or breaks their bow string. In the case of the bowstring, roll a d6 to see further effects. If a 1 is rolled it is the arrow that breaks and not the string, if a 2-6 is rolled then the bow string breaks. Characters using noosed weapons, such as a mace, simply lose their grip assuming they wear the noose on their wrist.

Option 2: Should a to-hit roll result in a natural 20, the attacker scores a critical hit that requires a further attribute check. The character makes a strength attribute check to which the character's BtH is added, CL is equal to the level or hit die of the target. Should the strength check be successful, a critical is scored. The attacker scores maximum damage, plus any magical bonuses, strength bonuses and the character's BtH. In the case of ranged weapons such as bows, a dexterity attribute check is used to determine if a critical is scored.

Option 3: When a natural 20 is rolled in combat, the attacker is allowed to make an additional attack roll. If the second roll succeeds, roll damage normally. If the attacker rolls another 20, they achieve maximum damage for their weapon type and may make an additional attack roll. If they strike on this third roll, normal damage occurs, but if they roll another natural 20 they get another swing and so on for as long as they continue to roll consecutive natural 20's.

A natural 1 in combat results in the attacker dropping the weapon.

If the die results in a natural 1 whilst using a missile weapon, all allies in the path of the missile should roll a d10 with the highest number becoming a potential target! If an ally becomes the target, the attacker must make another attack roll. If this roll successfully hits the accidental target's armor class then all normal damage applies.

Option 4: Roadhouse rules are by definition more brutal in nature. On a natural 20 roll, the attacker rolls double the attack dice and doubles any bonus damage. Thus a natural 20 with a +1 longsword and +2 strength bonus would deal 2d8+6 points of damage to the opponent!

If the attacker's rolls a natural 1's they drop their weapon or break their bow string/arrow as in Option 1.

Option 5: This method is slightly more complex than option 1, but falls within the same working framework. On a to-hit roll that results in a natural 20, a critical hit may result. Another d20 is rolled and the following table is consulted.

TABLE 17.1A CRITICAL HIT OPTION 5

Roll	Result
1-5	No critical, normal damage
6-10	Normal Damage +1-4
11-14	Max damage
15-17	Max damage x2
18-19	Max damage x3
20	Max damage x4

There are also critical fumbles. On a to-hit roll of natural 1 there is a chance for a critical fumble. Roll a d20 again and consult the following chart.

TABLE 17.1B CRITICAL FUMBLE OPTION 5

Roll	Result
1	Damage self for 1-8 hp
2-3	Damage self for 1-4 hp
4-6	Break weapon
7-10	Minimum damage
11-15	Lose next round's action
16-20	No fumble

Option 6: For those who desire slightly more complex effects from their combat round, use the table below when scoring a critical hit or fumble. All of the damage listed below is extra damage.

TABLE 17.1C CRITICAL HITS OPTION 6

1	Knock opponent down
2	Head blow, teeth shatter, 1d4 damage, can't eat until healed
3	Ear cut off, 1 point of damage, -1 listen checks
4	Chop off 1-4 fingers, 1 point of damage per finger, -1 dexterity
5	Crushing/Stabbing blow, blade stuck in rib cage. Reduces AC by 2, 1d8 damage per round
6	Crush bone, render one limb of opponent useless, 1d8 damage
7	Jaw destroyed, 1d8 damage, can't speak or eat
8	Elbow shattered by blow, arm crippled, 1d8 damage
9	Knee shattered by blow, crippled can't walk, 1d10 damage
10	Crushing blow to opponent's chest, collapsed lung, 1d10 damage, constitution cut in half
11	Gut wound, spleen ruptures or is punctured, 1d12 damage
12	Slice opponents in the face, blinded in both eyes
13	Lung punctured; reduce constitution by 50% per round until 0 (monsters lose physical primes), then death
14	Head blow, force knocks eye out of socket, explodes globe, blind in that eye, 1d10 damage
15	Massive blow to chest, victim's chest collapses, can't breathe, death in 1d4 rounds unless healed
16	Sever artery, if wound goes untreated 1d12 damage per round until healed
17	Chop off random limb, 1d12 points of bleed damage until wound staunched
18	Crushing blow to the skull, opponent knocked unconscious, 1d12 points damage
19	Eviscerated, instant death
20	Chop off opponent's head, instant death

TABLE 17.1D CRITICAL FUMBLE OPTION 6

1	Trip and fall upon ground. Lose round of combat
2	Drop weapon, lose round of combat
3	Weapon breaks, lose round of combat
4	Blow ricochets off target hits wielder, 1d4 damage
5	Slip on gore on the battlefield, hit ground, 1d4 damage
6	Strike companion next to wielder. Companion takes 1d6 damage
7	Wild exertions cause attacker to bite own tongue off
8	Stab or crush foot, 1d6 damage
9	Stab or crush knee, 1d8 damage, initiative reduced by 2
10	Strike eye, blind in that eye
11	Blow ricochets and smashes helm, helm driven into skull, temporarily blind
12	Thrust/swing places arm in cusp of enemy grip and remains stuck on armor, scales etc.
13	Weapon shatters, shards strike wielder for 1d4 damage
14	Overshoot blow, wrist strike opponent and shatters, drop weapon
15	Force of swing causes weight imbalance and knee blows out, crippled for 1 week
16	Weapon shatters, large chunk lacerates wielder's eye
17	Wild swing, gore, imbalance, wielder trips, and falls, breaking weapon punctures self, 1d12 damage
18	Trip past opponent, fall and drop weapon, 1d8 damage from fall, broken jaw
19	Weapon shatters, small piece punctures helm/head/skull. Instant death
20	Smash self in head, or fall on blade, spear etc. Instant death

Option 7: Weapon-style critical hits take the weight and sort of weapon into account when adding any additional bonus damage. Upon scoring a natural 20, determine the maximum amount of damage without bonuses an attack can do and compare to **Table 17.1E Bonus Damage**. The result in the BONUS column is added to all other bonuses for enchantment, skill, or ability.

Example: Firmorge the Fighter rolls a natural 20 with his ancestral battle axe which deals 1d10 points of damage. The maximum damage the axe can do before bonuses is 10 points. The bonus damage for Firmorege's battle axe is therefore 1d6 points plus any other bonuses.

TABLE 17.1E BONUS DAMAGE

Maximum Damage	Bonus Die
1-2	+1 point
3-4	+2 points
5-6	+1d4 points
7-10	+1d6 points
11-16	+1d8 points
17+	1d10 points

On a roll of a natural 1, the wielder of the weapon takes damage equal to the bonus damage determined in **Table 17.1E.** For example, if Firmorge rolled a natural 1 instead of a natural 20 in the example, he would suffer 1d6 points of damage for clouting himself with the axe instead of striking his target.

Attribute Checks

Natural 20's for attribute checks are most often resolved as assuming the character has massive success.

Plus 5: One way to award a massive success is to grant a +5 to a siege check when a natural 20 is rolled. In this way the Castle Keeper can reserve a chance of failure while still granting the characters a potential success. A +5 siege check works well when low level characters face an extremely difficult challenge. For example, swimming across rapids may require even a strong swimmer like Varg the **3rd level** fighter to score a 30 or better on his strength check to make it across the raging river. In other words, it's an impossible task as the best that Varg can possibly roll is a 26 due to his 18 strength and level. He rolls a natural 20 adds +5 to the score and achieves a 31, and swims across the impossible river like a fish.

Massive Success: Alternately, a CK could simply judge that the Natural 20 siege check always works. Furthermore they may feel that something extra should come of the roll as a way to reward the character and the lucky dice. In this event, massive successes may include but are not limited to the following list. CKs should build upon this list or use it as an example.

- When a rogue gains a natural 20 on an intelligence check to decipher an ancient script, the rogue is instantly fluent in the deciphering of that tongue, needing make no other checks when encountering that language in the future.
- When attempting to run and jump across a chasm, a barbarian character rolls a natural 20 for their strength check and not only clears the chasm but is allowed to take an additional action upon landing. This action could include an attack or possibly a defensive stance granting +2 to the character's AC until the end of the next round.
- When attempting to use an intelligence check to repair a broken object the character is able to successfully rig the object together so well that the object gains +10-60gp in value and a +1 to checks related to its use. For example, a rogue character gets a natural 20 attempting to repair a set of broken lock-picks. The rogue does such an excellent job repairing the lock-picks that they gain 1d6x10gp value and afford him an additional +1 to his attempts at picking locks when using those picks.
- When attempting a charisma check to trick the castle guards, a bard comes up with a pretty plausible story as to why he needs to get into the castle and shares it with the Castle Keeper either through role playing it out, or simply stating it. After role play, the Castle Keeper may feel that the story is pretty good, but still needs a charisma check to push it over the edge and get the guards on the side of the bard. The bard rolls a natural 20. The Castle Keeper rules that the guards are so taken by Bardic Spirit they not only give the bard and his companions a free pass into the castle, but also give up the exact location of the item the bard and his compatriots seek.
- When attempting a wisdom check to sense potentially hidden dangers, the character not only notices who is in the room but can determine exactly where the opponent is hiding, earning a +2 to their first subsequent attack or attribute check as regards to their opponent.

As you can see, the possibilities for awarding a little extra to a character that rolls a natural 20 are endless. What about the dirty flipside of the die, however, the natural 1?!

Like a massive success with an attribute check, a critical failure could have dramatic consequences depending on the sort of campaign played by the Castle Keeper and players. Again the possibilities are endless and may include but are not limited to the following list. Castle Keepers should build upon this list or use it as an example.

- Character who rolls a failed charisma check fully believes that the individual he was communicating with is now on his side and is in effect a new ally when nothing could be further from the truth. Not only does the opponent know this, the opponent intends to take full advantage of the character due to their sudden naïveté. This result requires clever role play on the part of the character and if successfully played should result in bonus experience for their participation!
- Like a critical failure with a charisma check, a character who critically fails an intelligence check may believe that some course of action or fact which required their intelligence roll is completely the truth and the absolute right way to do something. For example, a wizard may believe that a particular concoction involving rare and potentially dangerous substances is the absolute correct recipe. Results of using the wrong concoction could be hair growing from the wizard's ears, boils, an unpleasant odor, or temporary amnesia.

- A critical failure of a strength check could mean the character actually pulls a muscle or gets a strain resulting in a loss of 1d4 strength until the character is healed with a *lesser restoration* spell, or gets one full day of rest and light duty for each lost point of strength.
- Critical failure of a dexterity check could mean that the character misses a catch, trips and falls on their face, or otherwise loses a round of activity due to tangling themselves up.
- Critical failure of a wisdom check means the character sees and hears the inside of their helmet when attempting to notice unseen dangers. When trying to solve a riddle or some other concept that may depend on some inner insight, the character is absolutely certain that an incorrect answer is the truth!

Saves

Unlike other rolls, the SIEGE Engine considers saves generally sacrosanct. In other words, whatever the outcome of the roll on the save, it remains, adding only appropriate level modifiers and attribute adjustments to the roll. With saves, even if the roll is a 1, which would normally fail on any other Siege check, the 1 added to level adjustment and attribute bonus may be enough to achieve a successful save.

At this time the game assumes that a high enough level character would automatically find and avoid damage from a simple trap, or have gained enough experience to understand how to effectively dodge a magical effect. Similarly it would be assumed that characters having been exposed to weak venoms and would have developed immunities to them over time. In other words, one of the benefits of being high level is the ability to avoid minor challenges!

Subdual

Subduing an opponent or monster is a form of establishing dominance. This only succeeds if the opponent or monster believes the person doing the subduing is superior, or has been convinced that any established bond is recipr0cal.

Subdual most often involves a physical contest but may involve more, depending on the intelligence (and memory) of the opponent. Creatures completely lacking any sort of intelligence, such as a skeleton or a green slime, cannot be subdued. Creatures of bug level intelligence could possibly be subdued for short periods of time, but they would have a tendency to resort to instinct. Animals, particularly those of the herd or pack variety, are programmed to dominate or be dominated. It is simply a physical contest where the strongest is the boss. This would last until the boss demonstrates significant weakness or poor judgment. The wolf who cannot lead his pack to food may himself become food. Lower end human level intelligence creatures would follow a similar code, although the initial subdual may not require a physical contest at all. Intimidation may be enough. Higher intelligence creatures would certainly require more than a physical contest to be subdued.

A subdued creature is different from a charmed creature. It will always know it has been subdued. Some (lawful) may see this as the natural order of things, and go into it with little protest. Others (chaotic) will always resent it, and will seek constantly a means to escape or destroy their master.

Gaining Control

Subdual is a contest of wills, either the character or character or the creature being subdued wins out. Any time a character attempts to subdue a creature, the character must attempt to gain control of the creature.

In order to attempt subdual, the creature must be reduced to 50% of its hit points.

Subdual may begin as a physical contest, but evolves into a test of wills. Control is gained by making a successful charisma saving throw (add all attribute bonuses plus level). The Challenge Level is equal to the creature's hit dice or level. Furthermore, in this contest of wills, any damage the character may have sustained affects the outcome of the saving throw. For every level's worth of hit points the character has taken in damage, rounded down, the CL of the subdual increases by 1.

Example: A 7th level bard, Amanoth, with a primary attribute of charisma 14 attempts to gain control of a griffon. The creature's hit dice is 7 making the challenge class a 19. The character rolls a 13, receives a +1 for his attribute modifier and a +7 for his level for a result of 21. The check is successful, and the character gains control. However, if Amanoth had taken half his hit points in damage, the character would only add 3 to the roll for his level. The result is very different: 13 +1 + 3 for a total of 17. The subdual fails.

If the attribute check is successful, the character gains control of the creature. If the attribute check is unsuccessful, then the creature is unaffected.

Maintaining Control

Keeping a creature subdued may require a series of charisma checks. Checks may be required whenever the subdued creature's life is endangered or when the master commits some sort of significant error. Times to check subdual:

- If ill treated.
- If forced into evil/good actions.
- Highly stressful situations.
- Master very weak.

Keeping a foe subdued may be a far more difficult job than the initial subdual. A creature treated well and which shares an alignment with its master is less likely to rebel than a creature of opposing alignment or one which the character forces into dangerous or deadly situations. Chaotically aligned creatures, more individualistic by nature, are more likely to rebel, as are creatures of a higher hit dice than their master. Lawful creatures

may be more likely to wait for an opportunity to defeat their master and usurp his place.

Remember that subdual always begins in defeat and fear. In time, it may grow into a devoted loyalty, but this is something that the master will have to work hard to earn. Refer to **NPC loyalty tables** in **Chapter 4** above.

The Castle Keeper must make the final determination of when and how often the character must make checks in order to keep the creature subdued.

Alternate Subdual via Combat

A second approach to subdual comes by defeating the foe in non-lethal combat, thus demonstrating to the foe your superiority. The attacker succeeds at this through unarmed combat, or by using the "flat" of a weapon, that is, by using the weapon in such a way as to deal non-lethal damage. The weapon will do the same damage as far as hit points go, but the majority of this damage is temporary or "bruising" damage, which will heal relatively quickly. While attempting to subdue, only one point in ten will be real damage, the rest will be bruising. When the foe's HP falls to zero, the foe is subdued.

It is possible to accidently kill a creature that you are attempting to subdue. Taking the foe to a negative HP score equal to the value of its hit die will kill the creature (a creature with Xd8 dies when it falls to negative 8 HP). Also, some weapons are simply unable to be used to subdue, because they have no "flat" such as the morning star which has spikes pointed in every direction; there is no way to strike a foe using this without doing lethal damage. Some magical weapons, such as a *dagger of venom* or a *vorpal* sword may deliver a lethal attack whether the wielder wishes it or not.

TERRAIN

Combat is not necessarily fighting on an even turf, beneath the sunny sky. As often as not combat takes place in the gritty mud, along the slopes of rock strewn hills, in the mire of swamps, or on a ladder perched against the parapets of a stony wall. Combat often occurs where the defender chooses, or by sheer happenstance where opponents collide, and when combat unfolds in unstable or unfamiliar ground the terrain can impact the outcome in ways that little else can. Terrain can be a deciding factor in any combat.

Fighting in adverse terrain does not impact the actual fighting skills of the combatants as training, skill, armaments, and weaponry determine those skills. Terrain impacts the combatant's ability to use those pre-determined skills; furthermore, adverse terrain impacts the mobility of the combatants.

Example: Javiel, the **5th level** elven ranger, has entered some marshland south of the Old Post Road. The ground is very wet and muddy; as he moves tangled vegetation clings to his boots, cloak, and pants. He moves deftly however, using some of the tree-born vines to pull himself free of the muck. As he does so, one of the vines erupts in life, coiling around his arm in a rapid grip, knocking him off balance. Javiel instinctively leaps back, attempting to break the creature's grip by force, but he does not move with the force he thought that he would for mud clings to his boots and his foot remains grounded in the thick sludge. He staggers back pulling his foot free but his boot remains behind, torn from his foot by the clinging mud. Pulling his sword he attempts to chop the assassin vine's arm free from his own, but he fails to get his footing as the mud sucks his bare foot in as it did his boot. Javiel is in trouble for he must fight the assassin vine on the one hand, and the mud on the other.

In this example, Javiel suffers ability check penalties because the terrain impacts his ability to move and therefore his ability to fight. The assassin vine remains unaffected for it is a creature native to the swamp, but more importantly it does not move. Now if the attacker had been an orc in the swamp then it, too, would suffer the penalties for fighting in the adverse terrain.

The players and CK can role play through many of these adverse effects. It is not necessary to have every instance of mud, rain, sand, thick vegetation or what have you impact the characters with a mechanic as in a reduced attribute. Sometimes it is best to allow for role playing and descriptive text to convey the difficult features and the outcome of the terrain on the characters.

It is best to role play through the terrain; however, use of imaginary descriptions and temporary ailments for the characters, such as slipping down a rocky slope, is the most efficient approach to integrating terrain into the game. However, when the CK desires a more defined approach to fighting in difficult terrain, consult **Table 17.2 Terrain Effects on Combat & Movement** for the impact on the attributes, combat, and movement.

TABLE 17.2 TERRAIN EFFECTS ON COMBAT & MOVEMENT

Terrain	Strength	Wisdom	Dexterity	Movement
Up Hill	CL 1	N/A	N/A	¾
Down Hill	CL -1	N/A	CL 1	Double
Swamp	CL 2	CL 1	CL 2	1/2
Light Snow	CL 1	CL 1	CL 1	Full
Deep Snow	CL 2	CL 3	CL 2	¾
Light Vegetation	N/A	CL 1	CL 1	¾
Thick Vegetation	CL 1	CL 2	CL 2	¼

LINE OF SIGHT

This is a difficult concept to work with though simple in its basic application. How far can one see down a 50 foot corridor? Fifty feet, of course. How far away can one see a mountain range? Depending one one's vantage, up to a hundred miles or more. How far away is the sun, planets, or stars? People can see a long distance. On the other hand, one can't see something merely 10 feet away behind a wall or tree, and in a forest with dense undergrowth one may only be able to see 20 yards or so and in a marsh, the range of vision falls to a dozen feet or less.

The fact is, obstacles and not vision primarily determine one's line of sight. Human vision is fairly good. The prime delimiters are obstacles. Trees, brush, elevation changes, walls, houses, hills, etc. are the things that limit line of sight. There can be few hard and fast rules concerning line of sight as the CK must bring to bear a host of considerations for any given environment.

Consider a forest. The forest is located in a hilly region, and primarily consists of young growth, has fertile soils in well watered valleys and a thick undergrowth. In the late spring, everything is leafed out and growing well. In this condition it may only be possible to see 50 yards or less in the valley floors and a hundred yards or so on the slopes. Looking from slope to slope (100-200 yards apart) one will probably be unable to notice anything. In dense areas of growth one may only be able to see 20 yards or less. In some valley floors or atop rises, open spaces may allow the viewer to see up to a mile distant. During the late winter, when everything has died, the same forest could open up and one could see several hundreds of yards routinely.

Consider a desert region with virtually no vegetation but many sand dunes, rifts, or other topographic features with significant elevation changes. From a high vantage point, one may be able to see for several miles or more yet, on the other hand, one may not be able to see into a ravine through which something is moving a mere 20 yards away.

In all, we can see that the obstacle to one's vision rather than the limits of vision primarily determine line of sight. The Castle Keeper must determine the topography of the land and the amount of obstacles to determine line of sight. General guidelines for this are described below. These are divided into two categories; topography and vegetation density.

Topography: this is the degree of elevation changes the Castle keeper must contend with. There are 5 elevation types ranging from mountainous regions to alluvial flats or floodplains.

Elevation 1: These are relatively level topographic regions such as alluvial flats, flood plains, marshes or any other region which has significantly level lands.

Elevation 2: These regions are generally open plains and savannas with up to a hundred feet in elevation changes within a mile.

Elevation 3: These regions are broken areas with elevation changes of up to several hundred feet in any given mile and have significantly dense valleys, ridges, rifts, gullies, ravines and the like.

Elevation 4: These regions are hilly areas with several hundreds of feet of elevation changes within any given mile. They have highly developed ridges and deep valleys.

Elevation 5: These are high mountain regions with deep valleys and high peaks and have thousands of feet of elevation changes within any given mile.

Table 17.3 Line of Sight gives the basic distance one can see without obstacles.

TABLE 17.3 LINE OF SIGHT

Elevation Type	Distance
1	5,000-30,000 feet (1-6 miles)
2	2,500-15,000 feet (.5-3 miles)
3	1,500- 10,000 feet (.25-2 miles)
4	500 – 1,500 feet (less than .25 miles)
5	1,500 – 10,000 feet (.25-2miles)

OBSTACLES TO VISION

There are five different modifiers to vision distance based upon obstacles. Obstacles include trees, shrub, rocky outcrops, and other impediments to vision. They are expressed as a percentile reduction to the above chart.

Obstacle 1: These are barren landscapes with little to no vegetation, rocky outcrops, gullies or bends in the topography. 1-10% reduction

Obstacle 2: These are landscapes with some small underbrush, sparse trees and underbrush, shallow gullies or ravines, some rocky outcrops or slight and unusual elevation changes. 10-50%

Obstacle 3: These are forested areas with some underbrush, shrublands, or steppes with small trees and areas with rocky outcrops, ravines or other topographic features of similar nature. 25-75%.

Obstacle 4: These are forested areas with a heavy underbrush, young forests, dense shrublands or significant rocky outcropping, ravines, gullies and hills. 50-90%

Obstacle 5: These are jungles or thick temperate forests with dense undergrowth areas with significant amounts of rocky outcrops or sudden changes in topography. 75-99%.

In all cases, the Castle Keeper must use common sense and remember to mitigate all distances by other factors such as weather conditions and local topography and designs of the encounter.

The next aspect to line of sight to consider is clarity. Although humans can see a long way, we can not see that clearly. Even someone with really good vision has difficulty making out details at 300 feet. General appearances and shapes can be clearly determined at hundreds of yards (such as a biped versus a quadruped and large or small) but at 3,000 feet even these details begin to escape the viewer. They can only make out general shapes. And all of this in part due to the size of the creature.

Consider that an eagle can make out a mouse moving across the land at 3,000 feet, whereas a human would likely not even be able to see the mouse at 100 feet. The Castle Keeper must consider the clarity of vision as well when determining what a character can see and make out at a certain distance.

In determining what the characters can see, it is best to use the 100 yard mark as a measure. Consider a football field and what

details one is able to see at the length of one football field. Much can be determined including weapons, armor, creature type, etc. At 200 yards (or 2 football fields) those details begin to fall away and at 300 yards the viewer is able to only see general features. At 500 yards the viewer might only see the outline of the creature. Again, all this depends upon the size of the creature and the terrain.

COMBAT

Much of an evening's play centers around the iron rod of battle; here characters contest in arms with vile creatures of wild imaginings to save the innocent and earn the lauding wealth of glorious heroes. How that battle unfolds is dependent upon the CK running the game, how dexterous he handles the unfolding scenes and the mechanics that run the battles and the players and how they interact with the battle with cries of battle and tactics of their own. Below are a host of combat maneuvers that players and monsters are able to use. The CKs should study these maneuvers before allowing the characters to use them.

COMBAT MANEUVERS

There are innumerable actions that characters or monsters can take during combat. Most of these the CK and player should handle with descriptions, rather than through differing mechanics. For example, should a character wish to do a sweeping cut at his opponent while dancing off to the left, they should simply describe it. However, there are some actions which could use or would benefit from a mechanical effect. The **Players Handbook** discusses several options for the characters. **Table 17.4 Combat Maneuvers** lists several common combat maneuvers and their effects. Generally, the combatant must announce these maneuvers before the round begins.

TABLE 17.4 COMBAT MANEUVERS

Maneuver	Affect
Called Shot	-8 to-hit, Double Damage (or Critical hit if allowed)
Close Supporting Fire	Attacker strikes allies on roll of 2-4
Offensive Focus	+3 to hit, -6 AC, announce before initiative
Parry	No Initiative roll, +4 AC, no attack
Push	Drives an enemy back 1-10 feet
Reach	Automatic Initiative
Receiving Charge	Double Damage
Shield Blow	-6 to-hit, no extra attack, con save or stun 1d2 rounds
Shield Wall	4 or more form interlocking shield wall, +4 AC, +2 strength checks

Called Shot: This is when a combatant takes careful aim attempting to hit the target in a specific spot. The attacker suffers a -8 to their shot, but if they hit they score an automatic critical hit.

Example: Janna the half-elf ranger wants to make a called shot on an orc's helmeted head. The orc's armor class is a measly 13, but its helmet grants it a +2 and the head itself is difficult to hit granting the orc an additional +3 to base armor class. This gives Janna an Armor Class of 18 to hit prior to adding the -8 penalty for making the called shot. If Janna wants to hit the orc in the head she must make an attack roll of 26 or better. If she hits, she automatically deals critical damage depending on the method used by her game group. If no method is used, allow the arrow to deal double damage to the orc.

Close Supporting Fire: When shooting an arrow or bolt into a crowded melee, the attacker may strike a friendly. On their normal to-hit roll a roll of 2-4 means they struck a friendly. A second roll is made against the victim's AC and if a successful hit is scored damage is recorded normally.

Offensive Focus: The attacker must announce this move before the round begins. During combat they focus all their energy and attention into one concerted attack. They gain a +3 to hit, but suffer -6 to their AC.

Parry: The combatant must announce this move before the round begins. There is no initiative and they gain a +4 to their AC. They do not get to attack.

Push: With a successful push attack, the attacker forces the defender to fall back 1-10 feet. The attacker rolls initiative normally, and attacks in turn. They attack at a -2 to-hit. A successful attack forces the defender to make a strength check, if they fail, the defender is forced back.

Reach: Pole arms gain automatic initiative and attack first.

Receiving Charge: Combatant may choose to ground their weapon by placing the butt of it in the ground and bracing it with their foot or other means. The weapon must be a spear or pointed pole arm.

Shield Blow: Attacker can swing with his shield and attempt to stun the enemy. The attacker suffers a -6 to-hit, they cannot take any other action that round. The victim must make a successful constitution save or be stunned for 1d2 rounds.

Shield Wall: When four or more defenders interlock their shields they are able to act together, granting each a +4 bonus to AC. They are also able to act together against any creature pushing them or attempting to break the wall and they gain a +2 on all strength checks.

RANGED COMBAT

The atlatl, bow, javelin, pilum, crossbow, spear, and sling earned their place on the battlefield through countless contests of arms, both large and small. These weapons have their limits as it is especially difficult to hit moving targets or aim while moving. The stress of combat can detract from the aim, and both shields and armor go a long way towards protecting people. It takes skill, training, and experience to aim and shoot with

accuracy. Use these following rules to make the use of ranged combat more realistic.

Rate of Fire

Castles & Crusades allows an archer to shoot 1 arrow per round. This rule is designed with the concept that the archer is not in a pre-positioned attack mode, their quivers are not at the ready, or they simply have too much gear to allow a smooth flow of arrow to bow and string to ear, eye to target and aim. It does assume the archer is taking careful aim, picking a target, drawing a bead and shooting. However, skilled archers are able to shoot far more than 1 arrow in 10 seconds if they are prepared and they do not take the time to carefully aim. In this case, the archer is able to shoot up to 4 shots a round. In this case, arrows must be easy to get to. These shots suffer penalties for rapid rate of fire; the more shots fired, the more penalties. The combatant must announce this before combat and prepare his position, generally by laying arrows out in front of him.

TABLE 17.5 RATE OF FIRE: BOW

Arrows Shot	Penalty
1	0
2	-2
3	-4
4	-8

A crossbow on the other hand is easier to aim and shoot so receives no modifiers to the hit roll. However, the crossbow can only be fired once a round for the light crossbow and once every 2 rounds for the heavy crossbow. If the crossbowman possesses the necessary cranequin on their belt, they can increase the rate of fire of the heavy crossbow to 1 bolt per round.

Damage

Damage for the weapons also differs. The weapon's damage depends to a great extent upon its pull weight. For crossbows,

this is a static number already represented in the **Players Handbook**. For bows however, the number may vary. Bows come in five pull weights: normal, easy, difficult, hard, and extraordinary. **Table 17.6 Pull Weight** gives the required strength score necessary to use the weapon as well as its damage bonus, if any.

TABLE 17.6 PULL WEIGHT

Bow	Required Strength	Damage Bonus
Normal	None	None
Easy	8-12	+1
Difficult	13-15	+2
Hard	16-17	+3
Extraordinary	18	+4

ENDURANCE

Stressful situations, battle not the least, saps men and women of their physical and mental strength. Long struggles on the field wielding an axe and shield, in the face of constant danger, or driving oneself against a wall of shields in hopes to pull down one of the defenders to better get at him with weapons, or holding a line with a great shield receiving a charge from an overpowering enemy tests the will as much as the body. The mind and body work together to endure the suffering of constant strain. For characters this equates to an endurance score.

Endurance represents how long a character can withstand highly stressful situations. A character's endurance is equal to his constitution score added to his wisdom score; add all attribute bonuses to the final score. The resulting number equals the number of combat rounds that a character can continually endure heavy combat, strenuous activity, or highly stressful situations without penalty.

The Castle Keeper must be the final arbiter of what constitutes a stressful situation. The following examples should provide some guidance.

- The characters climb a steep cliff without proper gear, spending hours on the journey up.
- Battle in which the characters are fully armed and hard pressed, where the monsters do not give them a moment to recover. An archer behind the main line would not suffer endurance loss as would the front line troops. Though he struggles mentally, his physical demands do not equate to the struggle in the front line.
- Carrying a heavy load through a desert with little water.
- Forced to cling to the back of a monster that is attempting to dislodge the character through madcap aerobatic stunts.
- Being hunted by an unstoppable monster, in the dark lonely places beneath the earth.

If someone is reduced to a 0 endurance, consult **Table 17.7 Endurance** for the penalties.

Regaining endurance points requires only 1 round of rest per point, essentially just long enough for the character to catch their breath and allow oxygen to flow back into the muscles and give the brain a few seconds to grasp the situation and steel the nerves for another round. Any healing administered to the character returns the same number of endurance points as it does hit points.

TABLE 17.7 ENDURANCE

Score	Effects
1-2	-1 constitution checks
0	-1 all physical attribute checks
-1	-1 all attributes checks
-2	-1 all attribute checks, -1 to-hit rolls
-3	-1 all attribute checks, -1 to-hit rolls, -1 AC
-4	-2 all attributes checks
-5	-2 all attribute checks, -2 to-hit rolls
-6	-2 all attribute checks, -2 to-hit rolls, -1 AC
-7	-3 all attributes checks
-8	-3 all attribute checks, -3 to-hit rolls
-9	-3 all attribute checks, -3 to-hit rolls, -1 AC
-10	Constitution save CL = constitution score+bonus+10) or pass out

RANDOMLY LANDED BLOWS

Most attacks against a foe do not strike exactly where the attacker intended. Sometimes aimed at a chink in the opponent's defenses, a strike misfires due to the opponent's own movements or other battlefield conditions. These blows strike in seemingly random places. To determine where a such a blow strikes it is a simple matter to assign a number to a body segment, and then roll a related die for the purpose of hit location.

TABLE 17.7A RANDOMLY LANDED BLOWS: HUMANOID TARGET

Human, Elf, Dwarf, Goblin, Kobold, Giant, Ogre, etc.

Roll 1d8			
1	Head	4 - 6	Torso
2	Left Arm	7	Left Leg
3	Right Arm	8	Right Leg

TABLE 17.7B RANDOMLY LANDED BLOWS: QUADRUPED TARGET

Wolf, Dog, Lion, Horse, Worg, etc.

Roll 1d8			
1	Head	4-6	Thorax
2	Right Foreleg	7	Left Hind leg
3	Left Foreleg	8	Right Hind leg

TABLE 17.7C RANDOMLY LANDED BLOWS: WINGED QUADRUPED

Pegasus, Sphinx, Griffon, Hippogriff, etc.

Roll 1d10			
1	Head	5	Right Wing
2	Left Foreleg	6-8	Body/Thorax
3	Right Foreleg	9	Left Hind Leg
4	Left Wing	10	Right Hind Leg

TABLE 17.7D RANDOMLY LANDED BLOWS: DRAGON-LIKE

Dragon, Dragonne, etc.

Roll 1d12			
1	Head	6	Right Wing
2	Neck	7-9	Body/Thorax
3	Left Forearm	10	Tail
4	Right Forearm	11	Right Hind Leg
5	Left Wing	12	Left Hind Leg

DAMAGE REDUCTION

Combatants wear armor to protect themselves in battle; the armor deflects blows and absorbs the impact of various weapons. Various types of armor have built in designs specifically meant to counter various attacks. These designs are often regional and reflect regional circumstances and some armor is heavy while some is light. How one wears it or uses it, the terrain it's used in, the size of the opponents, the offensive weapons used, and similar concepts define the actual value of armor. On the other side of the coin, armor that suffers repeated blows would begin to break apart and wear out, losing its intended purpose and its overall value and effectiveness. To build these many facets into a mechanical rule set that realistically portrays the true uses and value of armor would necessitate a multi-tabled system that impairs the combat round and stops the easy flow of combat in **C&C**, thus increasing the amount of time it takes to run a round, and decreasing the amount of fun.

In **Castles & Crusades**, armor class defines both these roles. The AC represents that armor's defensive capabilities, both absorption and deflection. The armor itself does not possess hit points, but rather assigned the generic AC that conceptually covers any hit points the armor possesses. In **C&C**, combat rounds run very smoothly and very quickly in part because of this simply underlying concept.

However, some may want a more realistic or detailed approach to armor. Damage reduction addresses this issue, allowing armor a greater role in combat than simply conveying armor class.

The standard armor class rule is as follows: AC = base10 + dex bonus + miscellaneous or magical bonuses.

In order to incorporate damage reduction into the game, the players and CK must conceptualize hit points differently as the armor itself takes on hit points and conveys added points to the player or monster. There are two systems to choose from, Basic Armor Reduction and Complex Armor Reduction.

In either system, armor possesses a hit point value equal to 10 times its AC value. The character must track their armor's hit points, even as they do their characters.

Damage reduction is the number of hit points the armor can absorb from any blow that the wearer takes. If the damage reduction is 5, the armor takes the first 5 points of damage the wearer suffers in the combat round; anything over the first five points goes to the wearer. The armor can absorb as many points of damage reduction as it has hit points.

Basic Armor Reduction

In the basic approach damage reduction is equal to the AC bonus listed in the **Players Handbook**. Shields both increase AC and absorb the damage.

Complex Armor Reduction

This system encompasses two concepts. First, the higher the to-hit roll is, the more damage the attack does. Second, armor, instead of making the target harder to hit, makes the target harder to damage.

The character's AC score is replaced with a Defense Score, which is equal to 10 + dexterity bonus + miscelaneous, +magic. Any amount above this on the attack roll deals extra damage in addition to the dice damage determined by the weapon. The armor absorbs, or soaks up, some of this damage. The amount soaked depends on both the type of attack and the type of armor. Some armor protects better against certain types of attacks. Each suit of armor will have a hit point value. Soaked damage is damage that the armor takes. Once the armor is reduced to zero HP, it is destroyed.

The addition of a shield will both increase the defense score and soak damage. The shield will soak first if the total amount of damage dealt is not enough to penetrate both shield and armor.

Magical armor soaks additional damage equal to the magical bonus, and has additional HP for each point of bonus. +1 armor has double the HP, +2 armor has triple, etc.

TABLE 17.8 ARMOR REDUCTION

Armor Type	Damage Type							
	NP	BP	SL	CH	BL	SP	UN	EN
Padded	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Leather coat	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3
Leather armor	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3
Ring	2	3	3	2	2	2	3	2
Hide	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	3
Studded leather	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	2
Laminar	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2
Chain mail shirt	3	4	½*	½*	1	2	3	1
Scale mail	3	4	4	3	3	2	4	1
Cuir bouille	4	4	4	3	4	3	3	3
Breastplate, brz	4	4	3	3	3	3	4	1
Brigadine	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	1
Breastplate, steel	5	4	5	4	4	3	5	1
Mail hauberk	4	5	½*	½*	2	3	4	0
Coat of plates	4	5	5	4	3	3	5	1
Greek ens. brz	5	5	4	4	4	3	5	0
Banded mail	6	5	6	5	5	4	6	0
Splint mail	5	6	6	5	5	4	6	0
Greek ens. iron	6	5	6	5	6	4	6	0
Roman ens. scale	5	6	6	5	5	4	6	0
Full chain	5	6	½*	½*	3	4	5	0
Plate mail	6	7	7	6	6	4	7	0
Roman ens. Seg.	7	6	7	6	6	5	8	0
Full plate	8	8	8	7	6	5	10	0
Polish hussar	8	8	8	7	7	6	12	0

*chain-mail absorbs half of the total damage dealt by edged weapons

NP= narrow point

BP= broad point

SL= slashing edge

CH= chopping edge

BL= blunt

SP= spiked

UN= unarmed (including most natural weapons)

EN= energy (magical damage, burning oil)

Soaked damage from an unarmed attack does not damage the armor unless it is lethal damage. Lethal unarmed damage values are halved for determining damage taken by the armor.

SURPRISE

The nature of adventure puts the characters on the front line. They are the vanguard of the action and as such constantly run into monsters they had not expected, suffer ambushes or must sneak up on their enemy. In **Castles & Crusades**, characters or monsters must often make surprise checks. Surprise occurs when one party is attempting to ambush another, when one party attempt to sneak up on another, or two parties suddenly encounter each other.

These rules are optional rules, expanding upon those given in the **Players Handbook** and they pinpoint the check by the actual circumstance.

Ambush: An ambush occurs when one party lies in wait for another. The ambushing party must make a successful wisdom check, adding level, attribute bonus and any other factors, in order to successfully pull off the ambush. The CL is equal to the CL of the highest level or hit dice creature in the target party, plus any attribute modifiers and circumstances. Consult **Table 17.9 Surprise Circumstances** for CL bonuses. If the target is paying no attention, they are automatically surprised.

Sneak Attack: Sneaking up on an enemy requires the one sneaking to make an appropriate sneak check, adding level or hit dice when appropriate (ranger, rogue and assassin plus monsters able to actually sneak such as the wolf, shadow, etc), attribute bonus and any other factors, in order to successfully sneak up on the target. The CL is equal to the CL of the lowest level or hit dice creature in the target party, plus any attribute modifiers and circumstances. Consult **Table 17.9 Surprise Circumstances** for CL bonuses.

Sudden Encounter: This occurs when two parties, both in the dark about the others whereabouts, run into each other. In order to determine who is surprised and who acts first, roll a simple initiative roll.

TABLE 17.9 SURPRISE CIRCUMSTANCES

Circumstance	CL*
Twilight	+2
Dawn (first light)	+6
Dark, Complete	+4
Light Foliage	+1
Thick Foliage	+2
Ruins, Boulders, etc.	+2
Ground Open, Flat	-4
Sunny Day	-2
No Cover	-6
Attacker in Metal Armor	-2
Attacker exudes stench	-2
Target Lost or Distressed	+2
Target Loud or Noisy	+3
Target Blind	+10
Target Expecting Attack	-3
Target has multiple eyes	-2
Target using ESP	-4

*Modifiers apply to the party attempting to surprise.

HIT POINTS

The concept of hit points is intended to be a generic abstract. The actual "hit points" do not represent the actual wounds that a character or monster can take. Instead hit points represent the endurance of a character and his ability to maintain a fighting stance in the face of the flurry of mind jarring blows, blocks, dodges, dips, dives, and other steps taken throughout the combat sequence. The reduction of these abstract hit points represents an ultimate dissolution of a character's endurance and hardiness in battle, until the point they drop from a successful wounding blow, or from the strain of their exertions.

Hit points are an abstraction of the character's overall stamina, health, and vitality as it pertains to injuries. However, some of the hit point losses do represent actual physical damage, where the character is cut, stabbed, bruised, chopped, gored, trampled, crushed, torn, ripped, burnt, electrocuted, scalded, dismembered, or decapitated. Knowing when and how to track the physical damage can be challenging.

Generally, it is best for the Castle Keeper to role play when the character actually suffers physical wounds. When large amounts are taken in a single round, it usually equates to some type of physical wound the character suffers, with small amounts its usually only a exhaustion or minor bruising and cuts.

Example: During the first round of combat, Angrod suffered 3 points of damage. This represents a rather minor loss in hit points, so the CK says, "The maelstrom of combat thunders about you, the melee a flash of swords and shield. One of the orcs drives his shield up into your chin, driving your head back with a snap. You take 3 points of damage." In the following round as Angrod takes 11 points of damage from two different orcs, the CK says, "The blades whistle about you in a blinding whirlwind. One catches your shield, pulling it back, and slicing your arm for 5 points of damage. The arm is bruised and now bleeding a little. The shield pulled back exposes you to the second orc who punches you in the chest, knocking the wind out of you, and stabs you in the thigh. You take 6 points of damage.

The character cannot pinpoint what or where the damage came from, the actual wounds, the bruising, or having the breath knocked out him. But they have the indelible impression that they are suffering damage from multiple sources. Role playing combat comes with experience and some basic knowledge of what weapons are designed to do and how they can be used. The more you role play these combat situations the less likely that you become dependent upon mechanics to further the hit point erosion during combat.

For those who desire a more tangible approach to understanding damage in combat, and the wounds damage causes, there are several approaches to take.

WHY WOUNDS

Many find the allure of wounds vs. hit point abstraction a draw to their gaming table due to the alleged "realism" that detailed wounds add to the game. In the end, some players and Castle Keepers simply need to know exactly how their character or monster is wounded. They need this level of detail to draw the particular enjoyment they get from their RPG experience.

From a role player stand point, they want to know how the combat scarred their character so that such information can be added to the character sheet for extra seasoning. They require a rule that explains it all for them in a simple and concise manner that ultimately serves their needs without slowing down the play of the game!

What is a Wound?

A wound could be described as any damage that actually forces a change in the character's physical well being. This could be a cut that continues to bleed, a crushing blow to the skull that leaves a character stunned or confused, a cut to the legs that leaves a character slowed or immobilized or a wound to arms that impede a character's ability to wield weapons, cast spells, or bear a shield.

Listed here are several alternatives for handling wounds as they affect characters, their abilities, and their attributes.

Wounds as Hit Point Damage

For those seeking greater "realism" in their game, a simple method for describing wounds is to divide the total hit points of a character by 4. Each quarter of hit points represents a single wound.

Example: Grummander the Barbarian has twelve hit points. Divided by four, Grummander has 3 hit points per wound. Thus each three hit points of damage Grummander takes is equivalent to a single crushing bruise, slash, or burn. Using this method, combinations of wounds begin to affect a character's overall performance.

Continuing with the division of the body into four wound areas, a matrix of wounds vs. negative effects is used to show how the wounds impede the character's abilities. These negative effects are of course removed as the wounds are healed. Damage that exceeds a single wound would then move the character to the next level of effects. For example, a character with 40 hit points who takes 20 points of damage from a lightning bolt spell cast against him by an evil wizard would move automatically to the two wound category. If the character had taken 30 points of damage due to a failed dexterity save, they would then fall into the 3 wounds category and suffer all penalties that would therefore apply.

This method of detailing wounds is simple and straight forward without requiring a lot of book keeping as to "where" the wound took place on a character's body, and retains the spectacle of battered, burned, and bruised heroes going sword to claw against subterranean hordes.

TABLE 17.10 WOUNDS EFFECTS

1 Wound	No effect
2 Wounds	-1 to Attribute Checks and Attack Rolls
3 Wounds	-2 to Attribute Checks, Attack Rolls, -1 to all Saves
4 Wounds	-3 to Attribute Checks, Attack Rolls, -2 to all Saves

Wound Points

Characters and the creatures they encounter consist of a certain number of vital parts and appendages. These vital parts and appendages include the creatures head, torso, arms, legs, tail, wings, etc. The system assigns a point total which represents that part's overall value as it pertains to keeping a creature alive. The number of points assigned to each vital part is referred to as the Wound Points. Wound Points in turn represent a fraction of the creature's total hit points.

To allot wound points to a given creature, the Castle Keeper may assign the wound points according to the examples below or they may create their own more specific list of vital organs and assign wound points to those parts as they see fit. In addition to wound points for specific parts, each part also has an Armor Class value that is added to the base armor class of the target. This addition to armor class reflects the inherent difficulty in striking a target specifically in the head, arms, and legs as opposed to aiming for center mass and the desire of the target to quickly duck, dodge, hop, or sidestep from harm to these vital appendages.

Listed here are a few examples of a creature's parts and the fraction of total hit point suggestion for use in a complex wound and hit point system. Creating complex charts further break the hit points down into multiple wounds. In this instance, wounds are broken down by limbs, torso, head, and any additional limbs or appendages a creature may possess (such as additional arms, legs, tail, wings) and so on. Listed with the appendages are suggested effects for when wounds are suffered to the area, or if such wounds are dealt all in a single blow.

Note: Regardless of where a wound strikes the target, damage is still dealt to the creature as a whole. When the creature reaches zero hit points, they are incapacitated and possibly unconscious, regardless of how their wounds were received or where such wounds landed upon their body.

Area of Effect spells affect the entire body equally, thus would deal damage as normal and typically would not affect individual limbs.

Creatures with one hit die tend to be grievously wounded by any attack so a specific wound chart is typically unnecessary when dealing with them. If a character is attempting a dramatic action such as shooting a weapon from the creature's hand, simply add the armor class increase to the base armor class plus any penalties for lighting, distance and the like that seem appropriate and let fly with the slings and arrows!

Head: 2, AC = +3 to Base. A full wound results in -2 to intelligence, charisma and wisdom based checks and saves. If all damage is dealt in a single blow, the target must make a charisma save vs. death. On a successful save the target is knocked unconscious, and on a failed save the target is killed.

Torso: 4, AC = Base. A full wound results in a -2 penalty to all constitution checks and saves. If all damage is dealt in a single blow the target must make a charisma save vs. death. On a successful save the target is knocked unconscious, and on a failed save the target is killed.

Legs (Each): 1, AC = +1 to Base. A full wound reduces dexterity and strength checks and saves by 1 point each and reduces movement by 10 ft. If the full wound is a result of a single strike the target must make a strength save or find their leg broken, severed, or pierced in such a manner that makes the leg useless until healed, reducing movement to zero, and granting an additional -2 penalty to all constitution checks and saves. This damage may only be healed by a *heal* spell or a *regenerate* spell.

Arms (Each): 1, AC +3 to Base. A full wound temporarily reduces dexterity and strength checks and saves by 1 point each, with the target unable to wield anything with this arm until the wound is healed. If all of the damage is dealt in a single blow the arm is further broken, pierced, or severed in a manner that deals an additional -2 penalty to constitution checks and saves. This damage may only be healed by a *heal* spell or a *regenerate* spell.

Tail: 1, AC +1 to Base. When fully wounded, reduces dexterity checks and saves by 1, and the target is unable to make tail type attacks. If all damage to the tail takes place in a single blow the tail is broken, pierced, or severed in a manner that deals an additional -1 penalty to dexterity and constitution checks and saves. This damage may only be healed by a *heal* spell or a *regenerate* spell.

Wing (Each): 1, AC +2 to Base. When fully wounded, temporarily reduces dexterity checks and saves by 1, and flying is limited to half speed. If completely damaged in a single blow, the wing is further broken, pierced, or severed in such a way that the target suffers an additional -1 penalty to dexterity and constitution checks and saves. This damage may only be healed by a *heal* spell or a *regenerate* spell.

Example: In using the above method, a humanoid creature would thus be comprised of a 10/10ths worth of hit points. If an ogre for example had 30 hit points one would divide 10 into the 30 to get 3 hit points per part. An arm is worth one part, so the arm would be worth three hit points. The torso is worth four parts so would be worth 12 hit points. The head is worth two parts, thus is worth 6 hit points.

GRIEVOUS INJURY

Grievous injuries are injuries that leave a more or less permanent mark upon characters. If the specific wounds method is used, these grievous injuries are as described when dealt all in one blow. Thus, they are injuries that may cause permanent attribute damage, a slowing of the movement rate, a penalty to attack rolls or a penalty to saves. They may be injuries that are as uncommon as a loss of a sense of taste or smell due to a blow to the head, or something more severe that results in amnesia or random uncontrollable seizures.

Grievous injuries are most often described as injuries that take place when a character is reduced to below zero hit points. Though still clinging to life, their wounds are such that life ebbs from them as each round passes until an ally stabilizes them or heals them with magic. Most of the time allies are able to come to the aid of the wounded and offer them magical healing of some sort prior to serious permanent injury setting in. Other times however this may not be the case. Perhaps while using some form of critical hits rules a character is reduced below zero hit points in a single blow. Whatever the cause, a character reduced to negative hit points has suffered a grievous injury. Regardless, any wound which reduces a character to negative hit points that is healed with magic cures all wounds normally. Wounds that are allowed to heal naturally, or are healed through attribute check and special non-magical healing ability a character may possess could have continuing aftereffects as detailed in the examples of grievous injuries listed below.

Massive Fire or Acid Damage

Characters reduced to negative hit points due to massive fire damage such as created by a *fireball* or dragon's breath suffer from blistered, peeling skin, hair that has been singed from their body and undeniable long lasting pain. There is a chance that the character may also suffer blindness due to burning. Blindness may be avoided with a successful constitution save whose challenge level is equal to +1 per negative hit point. Once stabilized these characters must be magically healed to grow back fresh skin and hair or be horribly disfigured, suffering a permanent -2 to strength, dexterity, constitution, and charisma which may only be healed through the application of a *heal* spell, *greater restoration* spell, or *limited wish*. As with trolls fire damage cannot be fully healed by regeneration.

Massive Slashing Damage

Characters reduced to negative hit points due to massive slashing damage from claws, swords, axes or the like have a horrifying gash upon their form. If landed by a called shot the bleeding, grisly wound is where the attacker intended it. If dealt by a random blow consult the appropriate randomly landed blow chart above.

Head: If not healed by magic, horrific scar tissue forms upon the victim's head or face doing 2 points of permanent charisma damage. A *greater restoration* spell removes the attribute loss. If dealt by a natural 20, the character must also make a successful strength save or suffer blindness as by a *blindness* spell. A remove *blindness* spell will cure the blindness.

Torso: If not healed by magic, the victim suffers 1 point of permanent strength damage. A *greater restoration* spell removes the attribute loss. If the damage that reduced the character to negative hit points was the result of a natural 20, the character takes an additional 2 points of constitution damage as well. Healing this damage requires a *greater restoration* spell.

Arms: The wound partially or completely severs the arm. If not healed by magic, the victim suffers 1 point of permanent dexterity damage. A *greater restoration* spell removes the attribute loss. If dealt by a natural 20, the arm is fully severed and the character suffers an additional 2 points of dexterity damage and 2 points of strength damage. Curing the attribute loss requires a *greater restoration* spell.

Legs: The wound partially or completely severs the leg. If not healed by magic, the victim suffers 1 point of permanent dexterity and permanent strength damage. A *greater restoration* spell removes the attribute loss. If dealt by a natural 20, the leg is fully severed and the character suffers an additional 2 points of dexterity damage and 2 points of strength damage. The attribute loss can be cured with a *greater restoration* spell. Severed legs reduce the movement rate of the victim by 10 ft.

Massive Piercing Damage

Piercing damage is damage dealt by arrows, spears, fangs, or impalement on spikes from either a monster or trap. Massive piercing damage to any limb or organ causes additional bleeding to the target. Typically a character loses 1 hit point per round until healed or their wounds staunched. If the bleeding reduces the character to negative hit points they bleed 2 hit points per round instead of 1. If dealt by a natural 20 the character also suffers 2 points of permanent constitution damage that only a *greater restoration* spell may cure.

Massive Crushing Damage

Bludgeoning weapons like maces, hammers, and clubs deal massive crushing damage. Traps involving crushing walls, falls from great height, or siege munitions like catapult shot and cannonball, may also cause it. Like slashing damage, massive crushing damage may affect limbs and appendages. Unlike slashing damage, crushing damage tends to fracture bones rather than sever them. If inflicted by a called shot, the crushing blow lands where the attacker intended it to fall. If dealt by a random blow, consult the appropriate randomly landed blow chart above.

Head: If not healed by magic, the bludgeoning force fractures or dents the skull causing horrific disfigurement. The character suffers 1 point of permanent charisma and intelligence damage. A *greater restoration* spell removes the charisma and intelligence damage. If dealt by a natural 20, the character must also make a successful strength save whose challenge level is +1 for every negative hit point or suffer deafness as if by a *deafness* spell. A *remove deafness* spell will cure the deafness.

Torso: If not healed by magic, the victim suffers 1 point of permanent strength damage. A *greater restoration* spell removes the attribute loss. If dealt by a natural 20, the character takes an additional 2 points of constitution damage as well. A *greater restoration* spell removes the attribute loss.

Arms: The blow fractures the arm. If not healed by magic, the victim suffers 1 point of permanent dexterity damage. A *greater restoration* spell removes the attribute loss. If dealt by a natural 20, the arm is shattered and the character suffers an additional 2 points of dexterity damage and 2 points of strength damage which a *heal* spell, or *regeneration* spell heals. The shattered arm cannot wield any weapon or bear any weight until healed.

Legs: The blow partially or completely fractures the leg. If not healed by magic, the victim suffers 1 point of permanent dexterity and permanent strength damage. A *greater restoration* spell removes the attribute loss. If dealt by a natural 20, the leg is fully shattered and the character suffers an additional 2 points of dexterity damage and 2 points of strength damage. The attribute loss can be cured with a *greater restoration* spell. A shattered leg reduces the movement rate of the victim by 10 ft.

Wounds and Grievous Damage

A valid question for beginning Castle Keepers is when such rules should be included at the game table. The answer of course varies from game table to game table. Likely, such rules could be used by players with lots of role playing experience and familiarity with one another and their style of play. Players who are highly attached to their characters are perhaps not the best candidates for these sorts of rules as their use can go both ways. Bad guys can land grievous wounds on a player character just as easily as the characters can land them on the bad guys.

Also, as stated earlier, grievous wounds landed against single hit die or low hit point monsters and characters are fairly moot. Any attack which deals a large percentage of their hit points in damage is a critical injury. Monsters that can be killed in one blow by a standard weapon probably need not apply additional rules for wounds and grievous injuries. For example, a giant rat stuck with a battle axe need not involve searching a table to determine where the battle axe landed upon the small quadruped's body.

Alternately, when characters face a dreaded rival for a final encounter, adding some grievous wounds, called shots, and other details to the battle may enrich the gaming experience. Survivors could brag about the scar they received in a battle with Hildegarr the Black and his bandit chieftains. Other characters may reminisce how their allies drug them from the fray after being run thru with a spear, and how their friends saved them from certain doom.

As always, these rules need not apply in every game and should be used with the full consent and understanding of both players and Castle Keeper.

CHAPTER 18 – SKILL PACKAGES

The SIEGE Engine is perfectly equipped to deal with every situation that Castle Keepers may concoct or players may envision. By its very nature it decries the use of skills, feats, traits, adjuncts, or any other nomenclature that expands the classes beyond their archetype. It is not because the SIEGE Engine possesses some inherent superiority to using systems that rely upon extra character skills to propel the adventure forward, but rather because the SIEGE Engine makes such character skills unnecessary as it supplies the mechanic for resolving situations without the need for adding such skills. Even more importantly, proper use of the SIEGE Engine allows all participants to limit their horizons by only what they can imagine, and their character's attributes can achieve. Use of such skills pinpoints actions to certain checks, restricting their interpretation and use by narrowing them through definition, which in turn places limits on the imagination; these limits retard the natural expression and use of the SIEGE Engine.

Castles & Crusades is a game designed around the SIEGE Engine, in which the participants propel the events forward, not by pre-defined skills, but by what they are willing to attempt. Conan does not hesitate to leap from the tower's height because he is Conan, a warrior, a hero able to do what he knows he can achieve through his Crom given attributes, his strength, dexterity, and wisdom. These attributes guide him on his leap, and he does not wait until he perfects a leaping and or falling skill. He leaps, trusting to the gods that be and his own powers to land safely. He doesn't wait until he has a leaping skill. He leaps.

Roll the die.

Skill-based systems tend to restrict a player's reactions. They define what their characters are willing to attempt. Players don't allow their characters to leap unless they possess a leaping skill or at least a landing one. They swing with a great cleave attack not because they have gripped their double-bladed battle axe with two hands and attempt to use all their force and power, but rather if they have a feat that allows them to carry out this motion. These skills should enhance role playing, but because they are generally built around what the character can and cannot do, they tend to drive the mechanics of the game. The more mechanics a game possesses, the more limits are placed upon imaginative role play. These limits restrict the SIEGE Engine, but worse they restrict the free form and easy play that **Castles & Crusades** thrives upon.

Skills should be additions to role playing the character, not expansions of the archetype.

That said, the SIEGE Engine is uniquely adaptable. Its very simplicity lends itself to use with skills, feats, and trait systems as any such ability instantly falls under the guidance of the SIEGE Engine and the attribute check system.

Below are three approaches to adding skills to your character. The first is the preferred method, role playing. Here the discussion explores methods of role playing skills for characters and balance. The second approach is a very traditional, trade induced skill system, perfectly built for character background. The third approach is a modern skill system that builds onto and with the SIEGE Engine. Ignore them, use them separately, or use them all together as the CK and players wish.

ROLE PLAYING SKILLS

The easiest approach to integrating extra character abilities or skills is through role playing, allowing the SIEGE Engine, or the combat mechanic, to resolve any check or action the skill generates. If a player desires a certain ability for his character that is not specifically written up for his class or race description in the **Players Handbook**, attempt to accommodate it through game play. Discuss the ability with the player and determine whether it fits in the context of the game, and if it does, determine how best to integrate the skill. Often some type of sacrifice is needed, whether in experience points, weapons proficiency, or class ability, or other pre-existing trait. Once the skill is determined, assign the player character a bonus for making the roll against the SIEGE Engine.

Example: Mark wishes for his character, Karagi, to have some type of swimming skills. Knowing that the campaign takes place in the Darkenfold Forest where there are many rivers and deep streams, the player feels such an ability can only augment the game and increase his character's chance of survival. By creating a background where he lived upon the coast of the Sea of Shenal, he incorporates the idea of swimming into the game through his background. This seems logical and can only enhance the role playing and party's chance of surviving so the CK awards Karagi a +1 to all swimming checks. No penalty is required as the swimming ability does not unbalance the game.

The SIEGE Engine's attribute check system accommodates the swimming ability perfectly.

Other abilities may have a greater impact on the game than swimming in a river. Most notably combat abilities, but these can extend to influencing people, tricking people, horsemanship, and others. Or they may actually tread the other character classes' racial or class skills. These require more careful handling as they can set the character on a path of possessing more power than other character or monsters.

Example: Karagi the monk wishes to expand his character's reach by adding a sharp-shooting ability to his use of the short bow. With this in mind, he wants to be able to gain a bonus to a called shot; reducing the penalty as he grows in skill. The player announces that his character practices daily with the bow, improving his skills with time. The bow remains his main weapon, aside from hand to hand combat. The CK rules that the skill develops over time. Each normal level the monk gains, he must make a dexterity check, CL 8. Each successful check means the monk advances in skill with the bow so that he reduces the penalty by one until it is at 0 at which point his skills do not improve. Each failed check means that Karagi did not advance and must wait until his next level to attempt again. Conversely, the CK could require a simple attribute check CL 8 each time Karagi makes a called shot. If successful, it reduces his penalty by 4 or whatever number the CK is comfortable with. If the attribute check fails, the called shot automatically fails.

Balance is not an over-riding issue in **C&C**. Though the game is designed with some balance in mind, it is not as important to have a 4th level fighter equal to a 4th level illusionist as it is for both classes at 4th level to begin to play. With this in mind, awarding skills should not carry that great of an impact. However, awarding skills that begin to allow one character to over power the others and dominate game play is distracting to say the least, and on occasion forces other weaker characters into more mundane rolls.

Example: The monk Karagi wishes to learn to track. With only one ranger in the party, and the party constantly splitting up, the ongoing forest campaign is running into constant difficulties. Two players announce that the ranger Ki is going to teach Karagi to track as a basic ranger. The Castle Keeper determines this is fine, there is no reason that Karagi cannot learn the basics of tracking, and rules that Karagi must spend a year in game time to learn the basics, at which point he is able to track. Karagi will not be allowed his level adjustment on tracking checks, but gains a +1 on any tracking check made after his apprenticeship. Further experience yields more bonuses. Every 4 levels gained, so long as the skill is actively used, earns Karagi another +1 bonus.

In this example, Karagi can at no point catch up or surpass the ranger in tracking skills. Karagi gains the tracking ability with no further ability. The SIEGE Engine resolves the issue for the player and the CK.

Be mindful of the impact an added ability has on the game presently and that which will evolve as the character gains levels and power.

Evolution of the Character

Acquisition of a new ability does not necessarily have to be part of a player's design to change, grow, or strengthen his or her own characters. Abilities may come with level gain. The CK may award basic skills to characters as they see fit, after many game sessions or experience in that arena is gained.

Example: The campaign in the Darkenfold has lasted for over 6 years, almost 300 game sessions, and all the characters are fifth and sixth level. The CK decides that by this point, after many years of wandering the wastes of the woodland that all the characters, no matter their class, possess basic forestry skills in that they can find good campsites, start fires, set minor snares, do basic track at a +1, predict weather, etc.

Role playing skills opens up broad vistas of possibilities that are truly only limited by the imagination of the participants. Avoiding the idea of hard and fast rules for skills makes this process easier to control, and allows everyone to customize the skills for both the game and the player. For whatever skill the player desires, porting it from another game, or creating it themselves - use of the SIEGE Engine usually resolves the skill, allowing for a simple check.

There are, however, other approaches that offer to augment or even replace role played abilities.

SECONDARY SKILLS

Put simply, a secondary skill is the skill or skills a character gained while growing up and before they embarked on learning their class and the training they would need for the adventuring life. After all, few children train from birth to become freebooting adventurers. Most learn the craft of their parents, be it farming, fishing, mining, etc. Others might have a hobby they have practiced faithfully over the years and therefore have some small knowledge in the field in question.

The system below is an expanded view of such secondary skills. In the system presented here, each character may obtain at least one (sometimes 2) skills as befits their background.

The Castle Keeper may insist on the players rolling randomly for their Secondary Skill, or allow free choice as appropriate to your campaign. Allow characters one secondary skill, two if circumstances dictate or the CK desires. If rolling for secondary skills, roll 2d12 to determine the result.

TABLE 18.1 SECONDARY SKILL LIST

Score	Result
02	Acrobatics
03	Alchemy
04	Animal Handling
05	Appraisal/Bartering
06	Ars Magica
07	Blacksmith
08	Construction
09	Courtoise
10	Farming
11	Fibercraft
12	Fine Arts
13	Forester
14	Gambling
15	Jeweler
16	Leatherworking
17	Mariner
18	Mythology
19	Performing Arts
20	Physicker
21	Scribe
22	Strategos
23	Terrain Lore
24	Weaponscraft

A secondary skill provides a character basic knowledge in that area. To this end they gain a +1 on any attribute check associated with the skill. They do not add in their level bonus.

Some of the secondary skills are similar to the various abilities of many of the classes available for play in **Castles & Crusades**. However, while a secondary skill gives a character a basic understanding of the field in question, they will always be inferior to the expertise in the same skill provided by a class. For example, while a character with the Forest Lore Secondary Skill might have a basic grasp of the various aspects of the woodlands in the climate of his early life, the character will never equal the capabilities of even a **1st level** ranger. The same would apply to a cleric with the performing arts secondary skill; he or she would have a basic knowledge to perform acceptably but could not equal a **1st level** bard.

Please note that the precise definition and when/where the skill is remains up to the Castle Keeper.

Acrobatics (Dexterity): This skill allows a character to double their attribute bonus when evading attacks or making any attribute checks or saving throws regarding dexterity. Acrobatics may also be used if a character has been thrown back and wishes to land on their feet (successful acrobatics check). If this check is successful then the character does not lose a combat round in order to return to the fight. The Castle Keeper will determine if the use of an acrobatics skill is possible in a given situation.

Alchemy (Intelligence): The skill provides the knowledge of how to brew certain potions and balms, but the Castle Keeper determines costs and time to create such potions. Please note that any creation of magical potions/balms/ointments must follow the rules set out in **Monsters & Treasure**. Another use of this skill is to determine what a potion or other unguent is by using senses.

Appraisal/Bartering (Charisma): A character with this skill is well versed in determining the general worth of non magical items as well as the discrete techniques for haggling without giving offense. The successful use of this skill allows a modification of 10% of an item's cost per bonus point of charisma the skilled appraiser has.

Animal Handling (Wisdom): The skill of Animal Handling provides the character with knowledge of domesticated animals common to their culture, and their treatment, upbringing, and breeding. Simple training is capable as well, though more complex training is at the discretion of the Castle Keeper.

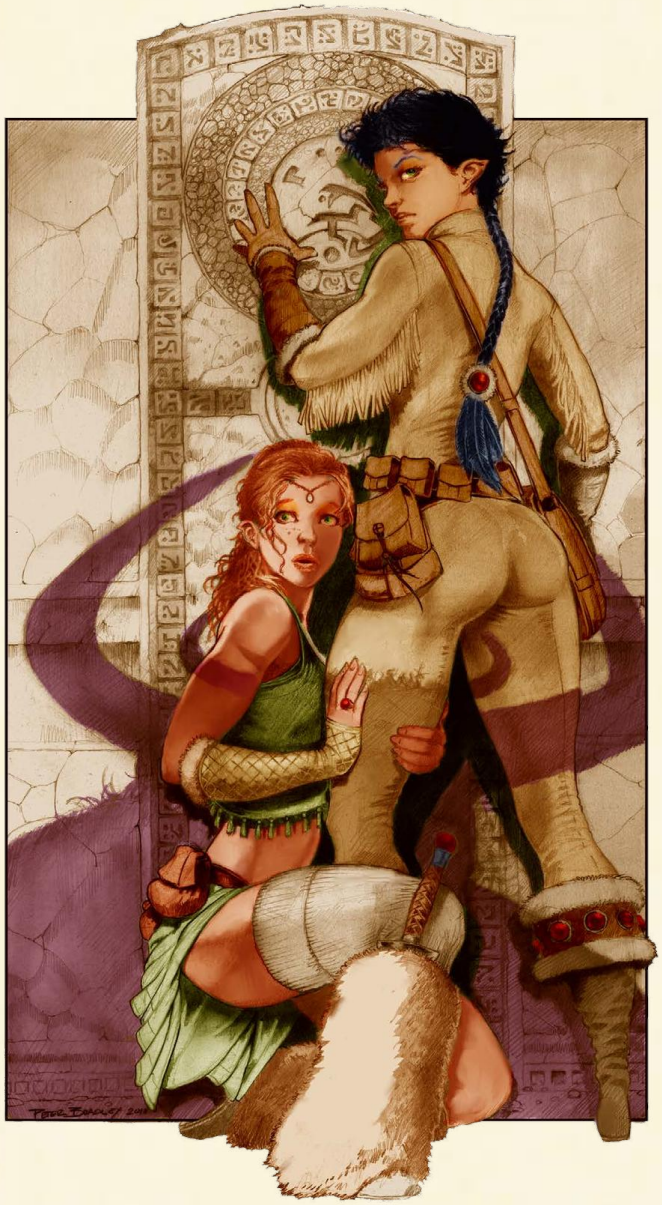
Ars Magica (Intelligence): This skill encompasses all the various minor disciplines any student of the arcane are familiar with such as witchcraft, occult, numerology, demonology, etc. It is also useful in the further study of the Magical Arts and a greater proficiency in dweomercraft. A character with this skill may perform an intelligence check to be able to recognize a number of spells on a scroll or other surface equal to their intelligence attribute bonus (always at least 1).

Blacksmith (Strength): The skill of blacksmithing provides the character with the ability to forge simple tools or make small repairs to simple metal items. Weapons cannot be forged or significantly repaired with this skill, as such falls under the Weaponcraft skill. However, armors can be repaired and simple (i.e. non-articulated) pieces can be forged or repaired.

Construction (Intelligence): The construction skill is a catch-all category for carpentry, woodwork and simple masonry techniques. A character with construction can reduce the time period for a given construct to be completed by 10% per attribute bonus point the character has. For a large project overseen by such a skilled person also has its construction costs reduced by the same percentage as well.

Courtoise (Charisma): This skill notes that the character is proficient with manners, social morays on their particular level of social class, and how to act among those superior or inferior to them. Public speaking is also part of this, as is the many methods society uses to segment itself (such as heraldry, regalia, etc.).

Farming (Wisdom): The farming skill reflects a character's innate understanding of growing domesticated plants and trees, along with an ability to gauge seasons and general weather patterns if they are within a terrain similar to their homeland.



Fibercraft (Dexterity): A character with the fibercraft skill has a general knowledge of textiles and woven crafts such as cloths, and reed weaving. Upon a successful dexterity check, characters with this skill can gauge the quality of fibers and the robustness of wicker crafts and could even distinguish a cloth or wicker's origin and worth.

Fine Arts (Intelligence or Charisma): The skill of fine arts covers the entire gamut of artistic expression in its physical sense, from design to sculpting to poetry and prose. At the Castle Keeper's discretion, the character can use their fine arts skill to double the attribute bonus for any check involving their artistic skill and its effect upon an audience. Art for art's sake would be strictly an intelligence check, while trying to please the audience would fall under a charisma check.

Forester (Constitution): The facets of the forester skill can cover a wide range of abilities, such as woodland lore, fire starting, setting small snares, identifying trees & ivies, etc.

Gambling (Intelligence or Wisdom): The gambling skill grants the character a proficiency in games of chance, to be specified as either gambling (wisdom) or leisure games (intelligence.) Whenever engaged in such a game, the character can make an appropriate attribute roll and add their attribute modifier to the check as appropriate.

Jewelry (Dexterity): This skill notes the character's ability with gem cutting, setting and crafting of fine jewelry and the use and appraisal of precious and semiprecious stones.

Leatherworking (Dexterity): Leatherworking covers a broad skill set, covering everything from leather cord weaving, tack and saddle craft and even simple leather armors. A character with this skill can repair rends and rivets in armor, bridles, tack and even leather clothing with a degree of quality and decor.

Mariner (Constitution): The mariner is someone with long experience with boats, boating and fishing. Depending on whether this skill is based on a background of fresh or salt water, this can include net fishing, use of sails, knots, undertow, sand bars, barging, and other such tricks of the trade. The player and Castle Keeper should work together to determine the details of this skill and what type of experience the character will have. In a gritty world, the above might be sufficient but in classic or epic worlds, some knowledge of magical aquatic creatures and sorcery might be expected.

Mythology (Intelligence): This skill (chosen either with emphasis on history or religion) allows the character to have knowledge of either local history or of other locales near the character's residence (CK's choice). The religion aspect involves knowledge of one's own worshipped pantheon/deity and their deeds, as well as a passing knowledge of other common pantheons as defined by the Castle Keeper in their campaign.

Performing Arts (Charisma): The skills of performing arts comprise any method of artistic expression that entertains an audience by physical activity. This can encompass acting,

singing, juggling, etc. The parameters should be specified between the player and Castle Keeper.

Physicker (Intelligence): The skill of the physicker notes a character's ability with medieval healing theories and some rudimentary knowledge of healing herbs and their application for minor ailments.

Scribe (Intelligence): The scribe's skill is that of penmanship, writing, and ink and paper preparations. Simple illumination is possible, as well as other writing abilities.

Strategos (Intelligence): This skill indicates that the character is well versed in the strategy & tactics of military formations both small and large.

Terrain Lore (Wisdom): The skills of terrain lore denote a character's familiarity with an unusual (i.e. not forester, farming, or mariner) terrain type that they lived in for some time before adventuring (or is the predominant area they adventure in). Only one terrain per skill is allowed and must be declared upon character generation.

The various facets of the terrain lore skill can cover a wide range of abilities germane to the terrain in question; such as woodland lore, setting small snares, identifying local flora and fauna, etc. Refer to **Chapter 5** above for various types of terrain.

Weaponscraft (Constitution): This skill is much more intricate than the blacksmithing skill, and as a result it does not come into use as often. But if a weapon is forged or if weapons need repair, this skill is vital. Weapons, especially those with blades, spikes or chains, require honing and balance, and the character with this craft (and tools) can refurbish most weapons at need or if sufficiently supplied could forge them as well. The Castle Keeper defines the exact parameters of this skill, but most weapons that are damaged due to chipping, bending, or in certain limited circumstances, broken can be repaired with sufficient materials and time.

ADVANTAGES

Advantages are a rules option for the **Castles & Crusades** game, offering characters the ability to go beyond the standard abilities offered by their character class. Advantages allow the character to add variety to their archetype and diversity in picking their own unique character traits. These advantages go a bit deeper than pure numbers, prime attributes, and by-the-level class abilities, reflecting the role playing needs of the individual player.

Similar to experience point progression, the progression of advantages differs from class to class. The reason for this is that different classes have sweet spots where they gain a class ability merely by virtue of leveling up. At other levels they receive nothing or merely gain some small improvement in an existing ability. When playing **Castles & Crusades** with the advantage optional rules, the following differentiated advantage gains are suggested to facilitate balance and give characters something more than hit points, attribute points, or another point of BtH bonus for leveling up.

WHEN IS AN ADVANTAGE AN ADVANTAGE?

Advantages exist as an option that may be substituted for an equal class ability, or taken if the advantage options are used as additions to existing class abilities.

As mentioned in general terms, an advantage is a special ability that the player chooses to best represent unique actions that their character can do. Advantages allow a player greater mechanical versatility in achieving their character concept within the confines of the SIEGE Engine's resolution mechanic.

Learning or earning the ability to be more accurate with a specific weapon type is an advantage. Learning a special move or unique kick not covered by the abilities addressed in the character arch-type is an advantage. Equally, focusing on a signature spell, school of magic, or style of armor are all advantages that players earn through the course of play.

ADVANTAGE AND ATTRIBUTE CHECKS

When designing advantages for your campaign, the simple rule of thumb remains: if an attribute check handles the situation best, use the SIEGE Engine. The ability to swim or ride a horse does not necessarily require a specially designed advantage to resolve. Simply making an attribute check fills this need with no real difficulty. To do so better than average however, or gain some bonus to the die roll not ordinarily opened to a character, due to not being prime in the ability, would necessitate creation of an advantage to fill that niche for that character.

For example, Yukesh the Sneaky wished to be a championship style swimmer, but was not prime in strength, and therefore has a difficult time swimming. In this instance, Yukesh would greatly benefit from an advantage to fulfill their character concept. Yukesh's player and the Castle Keeper would then work together to generate an advantage for Yukesh that would result in a fair and equitable solution that fills the player's desire, but maintains the play balance required by the Keeper's campaign setting.

Note: Abilities that replicate the class abilities of other archetypes are NOT advantages and should never be given as such unless in the form of a substitution for existing class abilities.

AWARDING ADVANTAGES

A Castle Keeper should be discouraged from awarding advantages to player characters for role play, or through the use of a similar power or ability or through consistent and frequent use of prime check to achieve the same or similar result. Although this may seem like a good use of advantages it has the potential for abuse. Care must be taken in awarding advantages in such a manner as the Castle Keeper must remember to award

advantages uniformly to all members of the gaming group. If a Castle Keeper chooses to award advantages as some form of game award, they should avoid granting more rewards than are determined at the onset of game play as the "maximum" for their campaign.

Advantages as Indicators of Campaign Strength

Presented in this chapter is a rough baseline for awarding advantages as characters progress in levels. The advantage system as designed in this manner allows for slow points along a typical archetype's career path. In other words, where possible advantages, and when they are earned are awarded on levels when a character class does not receive a "level up" bonus. It is felt that offering some form of class award in this manner makes gaining a level feel more worthwhile than simply gaining a handful of hit points and perhaps a base to hit increase.

Despite the suggested advantage awards being based on character class gains and levels, some Castle Keepers are certain to have their own ideas on what is best for their campaign. This is fine and well within their right as the adventure guide.

Castle Keepers who prefer granting advantages to every character class at the same level may wish to grant advantages every four levels.

Castle Keepers wanting a more aggressive and epic style campaign, may wish to offer advantages every two levels. Others may not wish to use advantages in their game at all, having a preference for gaming that is stripped down to its barest core.

Examples given here in the Castle Keeper's Guide limit the number of advantages given to a character class to six. Again, this may not suit the taste of every Castle Keeper, nor every campaign. What matters most is that a method for granting advantages, and the number of advantages offered is left to the Castle Keeper, the players, and the campaign at large rather than any rule as written!

Advantages as Class Ability Substitutions

Quite possibly, an advantage, or series of advantages, are more to the taste of a player or Castle Keeper than the class ability offered by a specific character class. For example, a series of horsemanship advantages may suit a campaign set in a Mongol Horde style campaign better than having everyone play a knight class. In this case, fighter or barbarian abilities gained at levels could be substituted with the variety of riding and mount related advantages and could be gained as class abilities for fighters or barbarians in such a campaign at the suggested level provided in the advantage description.

TABLE 18.2 ADVANTAGE PROGRESSION

Class	Progression
Fighters	1st, 3rd, 6th, 11th, 15th and 20th level
Barbarians, Bards, Paladins, Knights, Monks	1st, 2nd, 6th, 12th, 16th, and 21st Level
Clerics, Druids, Illusionists, Wizards	1st, 4th, 8th, 12th, 16th and 20th level
Assassins, Rogues, Rangers	1st, 2nd, 6th, 11th, 16th, and 21st level

TYPES OF ADVANTAGES

Advantages are broken up into categories based on racial, combat, magical, and general. For example, heritage advantages offer the various playable character races unique ways to capitalize on their innate racial abilities. Combat advantages are open to any character class who meets the BtH requirement for taking them. Magical advantages are open to any spell casting class that meets the requirement to take them. General advantages are open to any class, offering non-characters further ways to customize their character.

HERITAGE ADVANTAGES

These advantages all have a racial prerequisite.

Dwarven Heritage Advantages

Expert Miner

Prerequisite: Dwarf

Some dwarves are exceptionally gifted or experienced miners. They have an advantage when reading the secrets hidden within the stone.

Benefit: Dwarves who take this advantage gain an additional +2 to wisdom checks for stonecraft.

Giant Fighter

Prerequisite: Dwarf, BtH +1

Some dwarves are more experienced fighting these large foes in the open spaces above ground. They are adept at using their size and movement against the large foes to avoid attacks.

Benefit: Dwarves who take this advantage gain an additional +2 to AC when fighting giants. However, their tactics do not lend themselves well to fighting multiple opponents of smaller size, and they suffer a -1 penalty to AC when fighting multiple opponents of medium size or smaller.

Goblin Slayer

Prerequisite: Dwarf, +1 BtH

Years of skirmishing against goblins have yielded effective tactics to best kill them.

Benefit: Dwarves who take this advantage gain +1d4 points of damage with each successful attack when fighting goblinoids (goblins, hobgoblins, bugbears). However, they cannot hide their eagerness to kill goblinoids, and suffer a -2 on all reactions with goblinoids.

Special: Dwarves can take this advantage multiple times. Each time it is taken, the bonus damage die improves by 1, i.e. +1d6 the second time it is taken, +1d8 the third time etc., and each time it is taken, there is an additional -2 penalty to reactions.

Stalwart Courage

Prerequisite: Dwarf

Some dwarves display courage beyond measure.

Benefit: Dwarves who take this advantage gain an additional +2 to charisma saves vs. fear.

Steadfast and Sure

Prerequisite: Dwarf

Some dwarves are more sure on their feet and hard to move form their position.

Benefit: Dwarves who take this advantage have a standard AC of 20 vs. overbear attacks.

Tunnel Vision

Prerequisite: Dwarf

Some dwarves have grown accustomed to being underground and in the darkness, and their senses have attuned themselves to this environment.

Benefit: Dwarves who take this advantage double the range of their deepvision to 240 ft., but are unused to daylight, and their range of vision in daylight is reduced to 30 ft.

Elven Heritage Advantages

Affinity to Nature

Prerequisite: Elf

Some elves are so attuned to natural surroundings that they can sense when something is wrong or sense the presence of danger before they are consciously aware of it.

Benefit: Elves who select this advantage gain a +1 on checks to avoid surprise, to detect hidden foes, and to initiative when in natural surroundings, but because they are so attuned to natural settings they are disconcerted when not in the wilderness, and suffer a penalty of -1 on these checks in those unnatural settings.

Arcane Training

Prerequisite: Elf, able to cast wizard spells

Some elves have natural aptitude for magic, and spend much of their youth refining the ability to work spells. As a result, the spells they cast are more powerful, but they do not train in other areas as other elves do.

Benefit: Elves who choose this advantage add 1 to the challenge level of saves vs. their spells, but because they spent their time studying magic and not martial skills, they suffer a -2 penalty on all attacks with weapons.

Orc Hunter

Prerequisite: Elf, +1 BtH

Years of skirmishing against orcs have yielded effective tactics to best kill them.

Benefit: Elves who take this advantage gain +1d4 points of damage with each successful attack when fighting orcs. However, they cannot hide their eagerness to kill orcs, and suffer a -2 on all reactions with orcs and half-orcs.

Special: The elf can take this advantage multiple times. Each time it is taken, the bonus damage die improves by 1, i.e. +1d6 the second time it is taken, +1d8 the third time etc., and each time it is taken, there is an additional -2 penalty to reactions.

Silent Stalker

Prerequisite: Elf

Some elves have adapted their skill at moving silently to other environments than their traditional natural surroundings.

Benefit: Elves who take this advantage can move silently in all environments (wilderness, dungeons, cities, etc.), not just in wilderness areas.

Weapon Master

Prerequisite: Elf, +1 BtH

Some elves receive advance training in the ways of combat, exceeding the skill of most elves with their weapon of choice. However, this extra training leaves them less adept with other weapons.

Benefit: Elves who select this advantage gain an additional +2 to hit with the weapon they selected for their weapon training ability. However, they suffer a -1 penalty to hit with all other weapons, as the extra training with their chosen weapon led to the neglect of other martial skills.

Wisdom of the Ages

Prerequisite: Elf

Because elves are such a long-lived race and treasure learning, they often know obscure or eclectic bits of lore and knowledge.

Benefit: Elves who select this advantage gain a +1 on all intelligence checks to determine if they have knowledge of some topic.

Gnomish Heritage Advantages

Animal Speaker

Prerequisite: Gnome

Some gnomes spend so much time in the company of animals that they have honed their empathic link with burrowing animals, and can actually speak the language of these animals.

Benefit: Gnomes who choose this advantage can converse with burrowing animals, but they are used to the company of animals not people, and suffer a -1 penalty on all reactions with non-gnomes and non-animals.

Improviser

Prerequisites, Gnome, Wisdom as a Prime

Some gnomes can be very inventive and improvisational and can cobble together implements.

Benefit: Gnomes who select this advantage can use materials at hand to create improvised tools with a successful wisdom check.

Kobold Hunter

Prerequisite: Gnome, +1 BtH

Years of skirmishing against kobolds have yielded effective tactics to best kill them.

Benefit: Gnomes who take this advantage gain +1d4 points of damage with each successful attack when fighting kobolds. However, they cannot hide their eagerness to kill kobolds, and suffer a -2 on all reactions with kobolds.

Special: Gnomes can take this advantage multiple times. Each time it is taken, the bonus damage die improves by 1, i.e. +1d6 the second time it is taken, +1d8 the third time etc., and each time it is taken, there is an additional -2 penalty to reactions.

Magical Affinity

Prerequisite: Gnome

Some gnomes have more natural aptitude for magic than others.

Benefit: Gnomes who select this feat can cast their innate spells (*dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, and *prestidigitation*) 2/day instead of 1/day.

Scent

Prerequisite: Gnome

For some gnomes, the large bulbous nose is not just for show, and they have a keen sense of smell similar to that of an animal.

Benefit: Gnomes who select this advantage can make wisdom checks to detect the presence of hidden creatures, or to track creatures by scent, and can add their character level to the checks. However, because their nose is so sensitive, they suffer a -2 penalty on all saves vs. noxious smells or gases that sicken or poison.

Trickster

Prerequisite: Gnome, ability to cast Illusionist spells

Some gnomes have a natural affinity for magical deceptions, but tend to think all magic involves deception and trickery.

Benefit: Gnomes who choose this advantage gain +1 to the Challenge Level of their spells when determining saving throw target numbers, but suffer a -1 penalty on all their saves vs. magic other than illusion magic, as they assume all magic is illusion based.

Half-Elven Heritage Advantages

Enhanced Empathy

Prerequisite: Half-Elf, Charisma 13

Half-elves' natural empathy allows them to gain an edge when interacting with others.

Benefit: Half-Elves who select this advantage gain an additional +2 to all reactions.

Enhanced Spell Resistance

Prerequisites: Half-elf with human lineage, Wis 13

Half-elves of human lineage with this advantage are more resistant to spells and spell-like abilities that charm or unnaturally cause sleep. When making saving throws against these types of spells, they receive a +4 bonus.

Extra Prime

Prerequisite: Half-elf with human lineage

Some half-elves favor their human heritage and more closely resemble humans.

Benefit: Half-elves with a human heritage who select this advantage treat their secondary attribute (i.e. the one they chose the +2 for) as a third prime.

Special: The half-elf can only select this advantage once, and the third prime chosen can only be the attribute selected to get the bonus at character creation.

Keen Senses

Prerequisite: Half-Elf with Elven lineage

Some half-elves have senses out of the ordinary.

Benefit: Half-elves of elven lineage who select this advantage add their level to all checks to notice or hear something.

Stealthy Scout

Prerequisite: Half-elf

Half-elve's natural ability to move silently allows them to move silently in other environments as well.

Benefit: Half-elves who select this advantage can use their move silently in any environment, not just wilderness settings.

Weapon Training

Prerequisite: Half-elf with Elven lineage

Half-elves raised among their elven brethren train with the traditional weapons of their people.

Benefit: Half-elves of elven lineage who select this advantage receive a +1 bonus to-hit with one of the following weapons: composite longbow, composite shortbow, longbow, shortbow, longsword, or shortsword.

Halfling Advantages

Cat's Eye

Prerequisite: Halfling

Some halflings are better at seeing in the dark than others.

Benefit: Halflings who select this advantage can see twice the normal range in starlight and moonlight, and can see up to 30 feet underground or in areas with poor illumination.

Deadeye

Prerequisite: Halfling, BtH +1

Some halflings have exceptional aim.

Benefit: Halflings who select this advantage gain a +1 bonus to all attacks with thrown weapons and slings.

Exceptional Courage

Prerequisite: Halfling

Some halflings are made of sterner stuff.

Benefit: Halflings who select this advantage gain an additional +2 on charisma saving throws.

Hardy

Prerequisite: Halfling, Constitution 13

Some Halflings are stout and resistant to harmful substances.

Benefit: Halflings who select this advantage gain an additional +2 to constitution saves.

Quickstep

Prerequisite: Halfling, Dexterity 13

Some halflings have spent more time with big folk and are adept at keeping pace with them.

Benefit: Halflings who select this advantage have a base movement of 30 instead of 20.

Scrounger

Prerequisite: Halfling

Some halflings have an innate talent for finding what they are looking for - food, drink, treasure, etc.

Benefit: Halflings who select this advantage gain a +2 on all attribute checks when searching for something.

Half-Orc Advantages

Bloodhound

Prerequisite: Half-orc, Wisdom 13

Some half-orc's sense of smell is so keen they can use it to track.

Benefit: Half-orcs who select this advantage can attempt to track prey by scent by making a wisdom attribute check.

Fierce Warrior

Prerequisite: Half-Orc, BtH +1

Due to their violent upbringing, some half-orcs are skilled at dealing damage quickly with reckless blows in fierce combat.

Benefit: A half-orc can increase the intensity and fierceness of attacks gaining a +2 to damage with a successful hit, but the recklessness of their attack incurs a -2 penalty on their armor class until their next action.

Intimidating Presence

Prerequisite: Half-Orc, BtH +1

Some half-orcs radiate an aura of menace that unnerves opponents in single combat against them.

Benefit: A half-orc who chooses this advantage intimidates foes that face him one on one in combat. Such a foe suffers a -1 penalty to all attack roles. However, this intimidating presence puts others off in non-combat situations, and half-orcs who select it suffer a -1 penalty on all reactions.

Special: The reaction penalties for this and prominent tusks both apply if the character chooses both advantages.

Prominent Tusks

Prerequisite: Half-Orc

Some half-orcs retain the prominent tusks of their Orcish forbears, allowing them to bite and gore.

Benefit: Half-orcs who select this advantage can make an unarmed bite attack at their normal BtH in place of an attack with a weapon. The damage for such an attack is 1d4. However, their more bestial appearance incurs a -1 penalty on all reactions.

Special: The reaction penalties for this and intimidating presence both apply if the character chooses both advantages.

Rock-gut

Prerequisite: Half-Orc

Because many half-orcs have to scrounge and forage to survive while growing up, they are able to stomach fare that would leave others sick and heaving, and can endure toxins in their system.

Benefit: Half-orcs who select this advantage gain a +1 bonus to all constitution saving throws against poison and to avoid illness caused by spoiled foods or tainted liquids.

Stone-Cold Killer

Prerequisite: Half-Orc, BtH +2

Half-orcs learn quickly it is a kill or be killed world, so develop a killer instinct and learn to take advantage of a surprised foe to dispatch them quickly.

Benefit: Half-orcs who select this advantage receive a +2 to damage on attacks against a surprised foe.

COMBAT ADVANTAGES

Combat advantages are subdivided into Melee, Defensive, and Ranged Advantages.

Melee Advantages

Acrobatic Maneuver

Prerequisite: Dexterity 15, BtH +2, Sneak Attack ability

With an acrobatic maneuver, the character places themselves in a position to attack a foe from any angle.

Benefit: With a successful dexterity check at a CL equal to the foe's level, the character maneuvers into position and gains an attack using the sneak attack ability.

Cleaving Strike

Prerequisite: Strength 14

Skilled warriors take advantage of the passing of one enemy, with a sudden strike against a second adjacent foe!

Benefit: When a hero manages to drop one foe in melee combat, they gain an immediate attack against a second adjacent foe. This free attack is at the full attack bonus of the hero.

Special: This ability stacks with the combat dominance class ability of the fighter, and works against any hit dice of foe.

Climbing Fighter

Prerequisite: BtH +1

Not all fights take place on flat ground, for those who have a tendency to find themselves fighting on precarious inclines or hanging from ropes and walls, the climbing fighter advantage has its benefits.

Benefit: Possessing legendary climbing ability, dexterity, and strength, the fighter suffers no penalty to his armor class while climbing any surface. In addition, if he can grasp with only one hand, such as to a rope, pole, piece of rigging, or depression in a stone wall, a successful strength check (no modifiers) allows him to make an attack with a one handed weapon.

Special: When used in combination with the run-by attack advantage, one could easily swing past an opponent on a rope or chain and strike them while moving.

Cross Block

Prerequisite: None

Combatants who focus on two handed weapons, use every part of their weapon to both engage enemies and defend themselves from opponents.

Benefit: While fighting with a two handed weapon (staff, polearm, two handed axe, two handed sword, etc.), the combatant gains a +1 armor class bonus against a single opponent in the combat round.

Flash Kick

Prerequisite: BtH +6

In a flashy display of showmanship and dexterity, the character forgoes his normal attack in an attempt to kick an opponent hard enough to knock them down.

Benefit: The move is dependent on speed and technique rather than raw strength and requires that they move at least 10 feet before launching their feet into the opponent. Whether they swing from a rope, around a pole, flip off the ground, or simply charge the opponent is up to the combatant. The combatant must make a successful attack roll to hit and a dexterity check

(CL=lvl or HD of the target + their dexterity bonus, if any) to knock them off balance. The victim of this attack suffers 1d6 points of damage and must make a successful strength check (CL=combatant's level) to avoid being knocked prone.

Special: The victim must be humanoid and the same size as the combatant or smaller. Dwarves standing on earth or stone receive a +4 bonus on the strength check against this attack.

Intimidating Strike

Prerequisites: BtH +6

The combatant delivers a blow so fearsome it can drive their foe from the battlefield.

Benefit: When combatant rolls a natural 20 on an attack role, they deliver a terrifying blow that unnerves the stricken foe. The target must make a successful charisma save or flee the battlefield as quickly as they can.

Special: If using the *Fields of Battle* mass combat rules, an intimidating strike requires a morale check rather than a charisma save.

Power Attack

Prerequisite: Strength 14, Strength Prime, BtH +1

Some heroes make the sacrifice of accuracy to deal greater damage in battle.

Benefit: Combatants may sacrifice up to -5 of their BtH and convert this into greater damage.

Special: Typically, as a Castle Keeper's option, a strength prime check could be allowed to replicate this advantage. In doing so, the Challenge Level is +1 per point of damage, and the attacker must have a BtH of at least +1. When taking this ability as an advantage, the extra strength prime check is simply avoided.

Run-By Attack

Prerequisite: BtH +1

Combatant can make a single attack against a creature as they run past it. As long as the combatant moves in a straight line, they can attack any single creature along that path. Fighters with extra attacks can use their second attack against a second creature but only if it is also within their reach as they run past.

Benefit: The attack receives a +2 bonus, but the focus on movement makes it more difficult to defend themselves, inflicting a –2 penalty to user's AC. A successful dexterity check (CL= level + dexterity bonus, if any) by the victim grants them the ability to strike back at the combatant before they are out of reach. A successful attack does not stop the movement.

Sacrificing Riposte

Prerequisite: BtH +1

Once per round, the combatant has the ability to turn the weapon back against an attacker that successfully strikes and damages them. The combatant makes a dexterity check immediately after being struck and damaged.

Benefit: If successful, the combatant may make an ordinary attack with their own weapon (or bare hands in the case of a monk) against the attacker that injured them. A failed check indicates the character was not able to bring their weapon around quickly enough to strike back, but the riposte is not used up. The character may make additional dexterity checks if struck with other blows until they have made one riposte per round.

Swift Strike

Prerequisite: BtH +1

Nothing finishes a fight faster than hitting first.

Benefit: When unburdened by heavy armor and bags, they character is able to make the most of their speed and grace granting them a +2 bonus to all initiative checks during a combat round. So long as they remain unencumbered, they are able to anticipate their opponents' actions and act on them swiftly enough to gain an advantage.

Special: The character must remain unencumbered to use this advantage, and are unable to use this advantage while wearing any armor with an encumbrance value of 3 or higher. The CK may allow some types of armor based on strength and skill level.

Tripping Blow

Prerequisite: Use of Two handed Weapon

Attackers using two handed weapons (spear, pole arms, staves, and the like) are experts at knocking their opponents prone.

Benefit: When using a two handed weapon, the attacker adds +3 to attacks rolls for purposes of knocking their foe prone.

Extra: Flails, chains, and whips, and monk unarmed attacks also receive the bonus of this advantage.

Two Handed Slam

Prerequisite: None

Combatants using a weapon two-handed put extra muscle into their blows, dealing additional damage, at a price.

Benefit: While using a weapon two handed, or a two handed weapon, the combatant adds an additional 1 point of damage with a one handed weapon, and two points of damage using a two handed weapon.

Extra: This extra damage does not exclude small weapons such as daggers, hand axes and the like as extra force may be added to any blow. When attempting to add more damage to the blow, the attacker suffers a -1 penalty to their Armor Class during the round that this advantage is used.

Two Weapon Expert

Prerequisite: BtH +3

Warriors improve their ability to fight with a weapon in each hand.

Benefit: The penalty for fighting with a weapon in each hand is reduced to -1 primary, -4 off hand, so long as the weapon in the second hand is light. As normal, attribute bonuses to dexterity offset the penalty further.

Additionally, characters may choose instead to defend with their offhand, gaining a +1 bonus to their armor class. Characters choosing to thus defend themselves take no penalty to attack roll with their primary hand. Characters may alternate techniques from round to round but must decide which action they are going to take before the first attack against them, or on their turn, whichever comes first.

Special: Characters wielding two identical light weapons, such as a pair of short swords, or a pair of daggers suffer no penalty with their primary hand when this advantage is taken, although the -4 penalty for their off hand still applies.

Vaulting Kick

Prerequisite: Use of a pole-arm, spear, or staff, BtH +4.

Attackers using a long hafted weapon such as a spear, staff, or pole arm vault into the fray, taking a kick attack that drops their opponent, offering an extra attack against the prone opponent.

Benefit: When making a trip or overbearing attack, the combatant uses the haft of the weapon to vault kick their opponent to the ground. If the attack succeeds, the attacker gains an automatic attack against the prone opponent but does not add their BtH to this extra attack roll.

Special: An attacker may substitute a 10 ft. pole for a weapon to use this advantage.

Defensive Core Advantages

For those characters requiring a bit more out of their armor and shields, or those who prefer to rely on their dexterity and speed to save them, defensive core advantages offer ways to improve armor class through skill, training, and just plain luck.

Armored Hero

Prerequisite: Armor Proficiency (Any)

Mighty is the hero who knows how best to use his second skin to his advantage.

Benefit: The character selects one particular type of armor as their signature armor. While in their signature armor, the character adds an additional +1 to their armor class.

Special: This advantage may be taken multiple times.

Curtain of Steel

Prerequisite: BtH +1

As deadly blows rain down from all directions, it is often prudent to increase one's defenses in exchange for melee acumen.

Benefit: Put simply, a character using the curtain of steel advantage may sacrifice up to +4 of their BtH on attack rolls in exchange for an equal increase in armor class. This advantage stacks with dodge. While in the curtain of steel, the character may only move ½ of their movement rate as they seek to actively parry incoming blows with shield and weapon.

Dodge

Prerequisite: None

Awareness of attackers leads to a more engaged defense.

Benefit: The dodge advantage allows a character to add +1 to their armor class against a single foe during any given melee round. The defender must be able to see the attacker before it can be dodged.

Elusive Grappler

Prerequisite: Dexterity Prime

The combatant is a clever wrestler adept at slipping free from any attempts to hold or pin them.

Benefit: Their base armor class against grapple attacks is 20.

Legionnaire's Shield

Prerequisite: Armor Proficiency (Shields)

The shield-bearing warrior with this advantage is specialized in the use of their shield to defend their vitals against oncoming attacks.

Benefit: With this advantage the shield user gains an additional +1 to armor class while bearing a shield in battle.

Myrmidon's Shield

Prerequisite: Armor Proficiency (Shields)

Professional warriors know the quality of a good sturdy shield to actively fend off foes.

Benefit: The myrmidon's shield advantage allows a shield-bearing warrior to fend off one additional blow per round. Thus a fighter using this advantage with a buckler, gains the use of the buckler against two attackers instead of one.

Sure Footed Warrior

Prerequisite: None

Combatants are familiar with pitching and churning ground, or opponents who seek to take them off their feet.

Benefit: Combatants with this advantage add +2 to their armor class against trip and overbearing attacks.

Ranged Attack Advantages

Brutal Hurl

Prerequisite: Strength 14

Attacker throws through the shoulder rather than the wrist using their great strength rather than keen agility.

Benefit: Attacker uses their strength bonus instead of their dexterity when making ranged attacks with hurled weapons.

Double Hurl

Prerequisite: Dexterity 14, BtH +6

Attacker throws two hurled weapons at the same time at the same target.

Benefit: The attacker takes one attack roll at -2. If the attack hits, it deals double damage, but adds strength damage only once to the throw.

Special: The attacker may not move in the same round that they attempt a double hurl advantage.

Great Hurl

Prerequisite: Strength 14 or Strength Prime

Attacker may hurl a non-traditional weapon as if it were a hurled weapon with a reduced penalty to attack.

Benefit: The attacker takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls instead of a -4 when hurling a non traditional weapon such as a battle axe, great sword or the like in battle. The non-traditional weapon has a base range of 15ft. when used in this fashion by a hero with the great hurl advantage.

Special: When hurling an object (or individual) of equal size, the attacker must succeed a strength prime check before attempting an attack roll.

Heroic Throw

Prerequisite: Strength 14, Strength Prime, BtH +11

The attacker can hurl a weapon with legendary force or accuracy.

Benefit: The attacker gains a +2 to-hit and double damage on a successful strike with a hurled weapon.

Juggling Toss

Prerequisite: Dexterity 15, Dexterity Prime, Bth +2

You can juggle multiple objects in the air and toss them at a target while juggling.

Benefit: You can make a number of thrown attacks equal to the number of objects you are juggling, but each attack is at -4 on the roll. You can juggle a number of objects equal to 2 + your dexterity modifier.

Special: The objects juggled must be small enough to be manipulated with a single hand. A dagger or hatchet sized throwing axe is the largest object that can be tossed with this advantage.

Longhunter

Prerequisite: Dexterity 13

Being the best archer on the field isn't always about how hard the bow is to pull, but how to use elevation and wind to advantage.

Benefit: Missile attackers increase their range by 1.5 and add +1 point of damage at attacks up to the standard range but not beyond it.

Special: This additional damage does not stack with the sharpshooter advantage, but merely extends the range at which the attacker gains bonus damage. The archer may not move during the round they are using this advantage, unless they have the skirmisher advantage as well.

Powerful Hurl

Prerequisite: Strength 14, Strength Prime, BtH +1

Some peltasts sacrifice accuracy for power, attempting to impale foes with a single blow.

Benefit: Hurler may sacrifice up to +4 to their BtH in exchange for additional damage.

Sharpshooter

Prerequisite: Dexterity 13

When firing missile weapons at close range, the attacker hits foes in vital areas and avoids hitting allies.

Benefit: Attacker deals +1 damage when within 30 ft. Missed attack rolls also miss allies, even if a natural 1 is rolled.

Skirmisher

Prerequisite: Dexterity 13

Adept hunters and missile weapon specialists can fire on the move.

Benefit: The skirmisher advantage allows a missile weapon specialist to move their full movement rate in a round and still fire or hurl their weapon.

Special: While moving and firing, the character suffers a -2 penalty to armor class as their focus is more intent on their target than their surroundings.

GENERAL ADVANTAGES

Charmed Existence

Prerequisite: none

The attacker seems to lead a charmed life and have a knack for eluding certain dangers.

Benefit: The character chooses one of their six attributes (strength, dexterity, constitution, intelligence, wisdom, charisma). All saving throws based on that attribute are made at a +2 bonus.

Special: The character can take this advantage more than once, but each time it applies to a different attribute.

Dashing Wit

Prerequisite: Charisma Prime, BtH +4

The character's rapier sharp wit and cutting barbs distract foes in combat.

Benefit: With a successful charisma check at a CL equal to their foe's level, the character's barbs distract them and they gain a +2 bonus to their next attack.

Special: The character can use this ability and attack in the same round if they do not move before or after attacking. This only works against foes who understand their speech, i.e. they can speak the same language and are intelligent enough to understand speech.

Fleet of Foot

Prerequisite: Dexterity 15, Dexterity Prime

The character is exceptionally quick on his feet and can move faster than most others can.

Benefit: The character can move twice their normal speed if taking no other action in a round, or can move their full speed and still attack in a round.

Knack

The character has a special talent or training in a particular type of activity.

Benefit: Characters who select this advantage can choose one type of activity from the list below. When making SIEGE Engine checks for this ability, the ability is considered a prime and the character adds their character level to their check roll.

When this advantage is selected, choose one of the following:

- Agility (tumbling, jumping, balancing)
- Athletics (climbing, running, jumping, swimming)
- Lore (astrological, alchemical, heraldic, history, etc.)
- Reactions (interactions)
- Tradecraft (armorer, brewer, sailor, weaponsmith, etc.).

Special: Typically these are not the sort of activities that are featured as class abilities. For example, climbing (in this instance) means having decent success at climbing with handholds, a rope, or a rocky incline vs. a sheer surface such as the rogue's class ability offers. The Castle Keeper should feel free to modify or add to the above list as suits their campaign style or needs.

MAGICAL ADVANTAGES

Some wizards and clerics need an extra boost to really capture the feel of a certain style of spell caster. These advantages are designed to aid in character development.

Adept Summoner

The character's ability to summon other creatures is more powerful than other spellcasters.

Prerequisite: The ability to cast a summoning spell

Benefit: Study and practice in the art of summoning other creatures to serve the characters allows the character to summon more powerful creatures or a larger number of creatures. The caster level is considered to be 2 levels higher when used to calculate the maximum number of HD worth of creatures they normally can summon and control.

Apprentice's Bolt

Low-level wizards and illusionists harness latent magical power to attack enemies.

Prerequisite: 1st-level Wizard or Illusionist

The wizard or illusionist may use a bolt of arcane power to strike at their enemies. The bolt can be fired once per round, has a 30 ft. range, requires a ranged touch attack to hit, and strikes for 1d2 points of force damage, +1 point per/2levels.

Example: Cascalian the 20th level illusionist is trapped in the wilderness without any spells or access to her spellbook. She may cast an apprentice's bolt at her orc attackers once per round for 1d2+10 points of force damage to defend herself.

Blessed Healer

The character's deity grants them great powers of healing, but at a cost.

Prerequisite: Cleric, ability to Turn Undead

Benefit: Through deep prayer and consultation with their god, the character has traded his ability to turn undead for the ability to convert his prepared spells into curative spells. After acquiring this advantage the character can no longer turn undead. Instead, they can spend one round praying to their god to convert a prepared spell into a healing spell of any sort. Healing spells includes all cure spells, *remove disease*, *remove curse*, and similar spells. This does NOT include spells such as *raise dead* or *resurrection* because the target of these spells is already dead.

Great Protector

The character believes the best defense is a good defense!

Prerequisite: The ability to cast spells

Benefit: An intense focus on protective spells and magic has increased the character's ability to use protective magic in an effective, and long lasting manner. While casting a protective spell such as *bless*, *aid*, *barkskin*, *mage armor*, or the like, their spell is treated as if it were cast by a caster 2 levels higher for purposes of strength and duration.

Hardy Caster

The character has great concentration, even when wounded.

Prerequisite: The ability to cast spells

Benefit: The character's focus on magic makes them difficult to distract, even physical pain can't keep them from completing their spell. They receive a +3 bonus on concentration checks to avoid spell disruption due to physical damage.

Holy Aura

The character has a visual conduit of their deity.

Prerequisite: Cleric, the ability to Turn Undead, BtH +2

Benefit: Through deep prayer and communion with their god, the character permanently trades the ability to turn undead for

the ability to invoke a holy aura. When they hold forth their holy symbol and chant a loud prayer for one full round, their god cloaks them in a faintly glowing aura that demonstrates their power and grace. Enemies within 30 feet of the character must succeed at a wisdom save or suffer a –1 penalty to their attack rolls. Maintaining the aura requires constant prayer, which prevents spellcasting but has no affect on the character's ability to fight.

Magical Aptitude

Some casters have a natural affinity to certain types of magical spells. Spells of this type cast by them are more powerful.

Prerequisite: Able to cast wizard spells, Intelligence 15

Benefit: When a wizard chooses one of the affinities below, he casts them as if he were a wizard of 1 level higher when determining random effects and when determining the Challenge Level of Saving Throws against these spells.

Special: A character can only choose 1 magical aptitude. When this advantage is taken, select one of the aptitudes below:

- **Battle Mage:** when casting spells that deal hit point damage to the target or targets, the character is caster level +1.
- **Conjurer's Call:** when casting spells that summon or bring forth a creature or being from another place or plane, the character is caster level +1.
- **Death Touch:** When casting spells that sap ability scores, kill, or deal with undead, the character is caster level +1.
- **Elemental Affinity:** When casting spells that involve one of the four elements (earth, air, fire, or water), the character is caster level +1.
- **Enthralling Countenance:** When casting spells that enchant, charm, or affect the mind, the character is caster level +1.
- **Eyes of the Seer:** When casting all detection spells and spells that reveal information to the caster, the character is caster level +1.
- **Warder:** When casting protection spells or spells that provide an AC bonus to the caster, the character is caster level +1.

Master of Light and Sound

The character has focused their studies on illusion magic, to the detriment of other magics.

Prerequisite: The ability to cast 3rd level illusionist spells

Benefit: The character has mastered the ability to shape light and sound to create particularly convincing illusions. Their in-depth study of the control of light grants them the ability to cast illusions as if they were one level higher with respect to saving throws, strength, and duration. Unfortunately, this deep focus makes all of their other spells less effective. All other spells are cast as if they were one level lower with respect to strength and duration (but not saving throws). This advantage does not change the number of spells the caster can prepare, only how effective, or ineffective, they are when they cast them.

Master of Shadows

The character's links to the Plane of Shadows strengthens their spells.

Prerequisite: The ability to cast *shadow conjuration*

Benefit: The character controls the shadows, shaping and fusing them into semi-real illusions that are more difficult to see through and damage even those that do not believe in them. When the caster casts *shadow conjuration* or *shadow evocation* their spells do 40% damage to those that disbelieve them, and they cast as if they were one level higher with respect to saving throws. When they cast shades, the creatures they conjure have 80% of the normal hit points, and, if disbelieved, they have 80% of the AC, strength, and abilities of their normal counterparts.

Special: This advantage stacks with the high-level illusionist ability solidify shadows. A spell cast by a high level illusionist with this advantage can do more than 100% normal damage.

Quickcast

The character's intensity allows them to cast spells more quickly.

Prerequisite: Ability to cast 3rd level spells

Benefit: Intense focus on your magical abilities allows you to cast your spells more quickly than normal. When casting a spell during a combat round, the character can choose to receive a +4 bonus to their initiative check. The intense focus required comes at a price, as they are limited to 5 feet of movement during any round they use this advantage and suffer a –2 penalty to their armor class for the rest of the round. This advantage can only be used for spellcasting, the bonus to their initiative does not apply to melee or ranged attacks or to movement. If they take damage while using the quickcast advantage, they must succeed at a concentration check (CL=5 + damage taken) to avoid having the spell disrupted and losing it.

Signature Spell

Some spells are so familiar to the character that they can cast them without preparation.

Prerequisite: Able to cast spells, Intelligence or Wisdom 15+

Benefit: Casters who select this advantage may select 1 spell for each level of spell that they can cast, and cast this spell in place of other spells of the same level that they have prepared or selected for the day. For example, a cleric who chooses *cure light wounds* as their signature spell for first level may cast *cure light wound* instead of another spell chosen for the day.

Special: This advantage does not give the caster any additional spells per day. Rather, it allows them to replace prepared spells with their signature spell.

CHAPTER 19 – CHARACTER DEATH AND FATES

As outlined in the **Players Handbook**, a character dies when he reaches negative ten hit points. At this point the character is removed from play until he is resurrected or reincarnated or brought back in some manner acceptable to the Castle Keeper and in keeping with the rules or campaign and game. The character is dead, but the player of course goes on and makes another character because **Castles & Crusades** is, after all, only a game. The core rules of **C&C** do not allow players to become too attached to their characters. Allowing the character's death to be more than a passing nuisance is improperly using the Siege Engine.

Unlike video games that possess fixed manners in which characters die, if you fail here, you die. **C&C** allows for an extremely fluid approach to character death. It is not always up to the die, as the CK plays the over-riding factor in the life and death of any character. This fluidity allows for the player to undertake far more heroic actions, and makes for an evening of lively fun like no other game can manage.

Below are several methods to mitigate death, to cheat it, and methods to make the fall of a character part of the game itself.

NEGATIVE IMPACT

A character dies when they reach -10 hit points. But what happens when they are only in the negative? The impact upon the character of going into the negative hit points is massive. Generally speaking, the character is removed from action and unable to do anything to defend himself or even move. Any attacks against the stricken character gain a +10 to the to-hit roll. The character does not get any attribute bonus or any bonuses gained from items that require his motion to use, such as a shield. Attribute checks, while they benefit from any attribute bonus, do not benefit from the character's level. Going negative on a battlefield, unless someone rushes to the characters aid quickly, means there is a good chance that that character never walks away.

However, it is very easy to expand the effects of the negative hit points into allowing the stricken character a role on the battlefield or game, however small. Consult **Table 19.1 Impact of Negative HP** for a more detailed look at the impact of negative hit points and what the character can and cannot do. Use this table in place of the normal negative hit point rules as related in the **Players Handbook**. At no point can the character cast spells or wield actual weapons, even magic items, unless their use requires no concentration. The Actions column relates what the character can do, the Effects what happens to their body.

TABLE 19.1 IMPACT OF NEGATIVE HP

Negative	Actions	Effects	CL
0	Crawl, able to talk, grab, hold	n/a	0
-1 to -3	Drag, halting speech, drag oneself	Physical Att reduced ½	0
-4 to -6	Immobilized, can talk	Goes blind*	0
-7	Mumbles in talking	Unconscious, Limb Loss	CL 2
-8	None	Unconscious, Limb Loss	CL 4
-9	None	Unconscious, Limb Loss	CL 8
-10	None	Death	

*The effects of the blindess last until the character is fully healed and has been able to rest for 1d6 weeks, or has receieved magical healing of any type.

Roll a saving throw for limb loss without attribute bonuses or level adjustments. Any limb loss that occurs at -7 is compounded again at -8 and -9. Consult **Table 19.2 Effects of Limb Loss**.

The effects listed below are only a sampling. Certain wounds result in certain effects, however a leg loss wound will not force someone to have breathing problems.

TABLE 19.2 EFFECTS OF LIMB LOSS

Roll	Effect
1	Movement reduced by ½ due to chest wound, leg wound, hip wound, etc.
2	Blind in one eye
3	Speech impediment
4	Arm severed or rendered useless, balance off. All dexterity checks at -1
5	Leg severed or rendered useless. Movement rate cut by 75%, all dexterity checks at -2.
6	Constantly hearing noise, hearing damage, due to blood loss, reduced hearing/spot by 50%
7	Bone heals improperly, -1 all attack rolls
8	Back damaged, unable to carry heavy loads, shoot compound bows, hurl weapons
9	Bacterial infection due to wound, lose 1 point of constitution
10	Head trauma from blood loss, direct blow, CL +2 on all intelligence and wisdom checks
11	Reduced muscle mass, poor healing, suffer 1 point of strength loss
12	Physical maiming, charisma enhanced or reduced by CL 2

DISEASE

Disease is defined as any pathological disorder that strikes an organism that causes discomfort, pain, and reduction of motor skills, impairment or death. In **Castles & Crusades** disease does not include pathological conditions caused by social disorders or posttraumatic stress caused by events or circumstance. Nor does it include autoimmune diseases as these are generally caused by genetic predispositions. Rather, disease refers to infectious diseases.

Disease should be used carefully, as involuntary afflictions to a character can greatly alter the way a player perceives their character. Being crippled by a bacterial infection is not something that drives one to heroic deeds, but it can greatly alter the way one perceives, or imagines, their fighter, druid, bard, etc. On the other hand, it can create unusually challenging circumstances to the innovative player. As always, of course, paladins and clerics can cure most ailments with a cure disease.

However, some creatures, such as rats, have the ability to cause disease through a bite or scratch. And though the bacterial infection caused by the bite may be unsought and unlooked for, it is a major ability of several monsters.

With this in mind, use of disease is wholly up the Castle Keeper.

The below charts may come in handy in determining what the particular disease is.

DISEASE EFFECTS MADE EASY

The quickest and easiest way to use disease in the game is to allow the afflicted a constitution save. Base the challenge level on the monster's HD or the level of the trap. The CL should be further augmented by conditions as determined by the CK, such as how dirty the area is, how bad the wound, how quickly and thoroughly the victim cleans the wound.

Once the CL is determined, the character must make their constitution save. If successful the character avoids infection. If they fail they suffer a -1 from all attribute checks until the infection is cured or runs its course.

Involving Infectious Disease

Infectious diseases are caused by agents that invade a host, and either through toxins they release, or that are released by the host to fight the invading organism, cause the symptoms of disease. Infectious diseases are communicable and can be passed from one to the other. Carries of infectious diseases include viruses, bacteria, microorganism, parasitic worms, ticks, fungus, rats, birds, etc.

There are many types of diseases and it would be an exhaustive treatment to list them all and their effects here, for game purposes the charts below focus on the system's affected. If contact is made the character should roll a constitution save, adding both level and constitution bonus. If the save is successful, no disease is contracted. If the save fails the CK must determine the severity of the disease by rolling a d10 on **Table 19.3: Disease Severity.**

TABLE 19.3: DISEASE SEVERITY

Roll	Severity
1-4	Mild
5-7	Severe
8-9	Chronic
10	Terminal

Once the severity is determined, consult the appropriate table below.

MILD INFECTION

If the infection is mild and the victim makes a successful constitution save there are no affects or duration. If the victim fails their save consult **Table 19.4: Mild Infection**. The effects of a mild infection begin immediately upon contracting the disease and last as long as the victim has the disease. The damage is permanent while the disease lasts and is subtracted from the victim's hit point total at the end of each week that they have the disease. For mild infections the effects wear off after the disease has run its course or is cured. The hit points heal naturally after the disease has runs its course or is cured.

TABLE 19.4: MILD INFECTION

Roll	System Affected	Duration*	Effect**	Dmg/ week
1	Cardiac	1-2	-1 all physical	1-2
2	Circulatory	1-3	-1 strength & constitution	none
3	Dermatologic	1-4	-1 charisma	none
4	Endocrine	1-4	-1 all attributes	1-4
5	Gastro Intestinal	1-3	-1 strength	none
6	Joint	1-2	-1 dexterity	none
7	Muscular	1-3	-1 dexterity & strength	1-2
8	Neurological, Sensory	1-2	-1 wisdom	none
9	Neurological, Cognitive	1-3	-1 all mental	none
10	Neurological, Motor	1-4	-1 dexterity	none
11	Respiratory	1-4	-1 strength & constitution	1-2
12	Urinary	1-4	-1 constitution	none

* Duration is in weeks.

** This represents a modifier to the dice roll, not the attribute itself.

SEVERE INFECTION

If the infection is severe and the victim makes a successful constitution save, the disease is treated as a mild infection, so consult **Table 19.4: Mild Infection**. If the victim fails their save consult **Table 19.5: Severe Infection**. The effects of a severe infection begin immediately upon contracting the disease and last as long as the victim has the disease. The damage is permanent and is subtracted from the victim's hit point total at the end of each week that they have the disease. For severe infections the effects wear off after the disease has run its course or is cured. The hit point damage is permanent until the victim is magically healed with a heal or regenerate spell.

TABLE 19.5: SEVERE INFECTION

Roll	System Affected	Duration*	effect**	DMG
1	Cardiac	3-4	-2 all physical, -1 intelligence	2-4
2	Circulatory	3-6	-1 all attributes	1-2
3	Dermatologic	2-8	-3 charisma	1-2
4	Endocrine	2-8	-2 all attributes	2-8
5	Gastro Intestinal	2-6	-2 strength, -1 dexterity, -1 constitution	1-2
6	Joint	2-4	-1 strength, -1 dexterity	1-2
7	Muscular	2-6	-1 dexterity & strength	2-4
8	Neurological, Sensory	2-4	-2 wisdom, -1 intelligence & charisma	1-2
9	Neurological, Cognitive	2-6	-2 all mental	1-2
10	Neurological, Motor	2-8	-1 strength, -2 dexterity, -1 charisma	1-2
11	Respiratory	2-8	-2 strength & constitution, -1 intelligence	2-4
12	Urinary	2-8	-2 constitution	1-2

* Duration is in weeks.

** This represents a modifier to the dice roll, not the attribute itself.

CHRONIC INFECTION

If the infection is chronic and the victim makes a successful constitution save the disease is treated as a severe infection, consult **Table 19.5: Severe Infection**. If the victim fails their save consult **Table 19.6: Chronic Infection**. The effects of a chronic infection begin immediately upon contracting the disease and last as long as the victim has the disease. The damage is permanent and is subtracted from the victim's hit point total at the end of each week that they have the disease. For severe infections the effects wear off after the disease has run its course or is cured. The hit point damage is permanent until the victim is magically healed with a *heal* or *regenerate* spell.

TABLE 19.6: CHRONIC INFECTION

Roll	System Affected	Duration*	Effect**	DMG
1	Cardia	4-8	-3 all physical, -2 intelligence	3-5
2	Circulatory	4-12	-2 all attributes	2-4
3	Dermatologic	3-9	-4 charisma	2-4
4	Endocrine	4-12	-3 all attributes	3-9
5	Gastro Intestinal	3-7	-3 strength, -2 dexterity, -2 constitution	2-4
6	Joint	3-9	-2 strength, -2 dexterity	2-4
7	Muscular	3-7	-2 dexterity & strength	3-5
8	Neurological, Sensory	4-12	-3 wisdom, -2 intelligence & charisma	2-4
9	Neurological, Cognitive	3-9	-3 all mental	2-4
10	Neurological, Motor	4-12	-2 strength, -4 dexterity, -2 charisma	2-4
11	Respiratory	4-12	-3 strength & constitution, -2 intelligence	3-5
12	Urinary	3-8	-3 constitution	2-4

* Duration is in weeks.

** This represents a modifier to the dice roll, not the attribute itself.

*** This victim afflicted with this condition must make a weekly insanity to roll. See Insanity below.

TERMINAL INFECTION

If the infection is terminal and the victim makes a successful constitution save the disease is treated as a chronic infection, consult **Table 19.6: Chronic Infection**. If the victim fails their save consult **Table 19.7: Terminal Infection**. The effects of a terminal infection begin immediately upon contracting the disease and last as long as the victim has the disease. The damage is permanent and is subtracted from the victim's hit point total at the end of each week that they have the disease. For severe infections the effects wear off after the disease has run its course or is cured. The hit point damage is permanent until the victim is magically healed with a heal or regenerate spell.

Where death is indicated the victim must make a successful constitution save beginning each week after the minimum number of weeks they can contract the disease. The CL is equal to the number of weeks they have had the disease. If they fail, they die. If the victim is not cured before the maximum number of weeks they have the disease, they die, and at this point, the disease is too far gone, and no constitution save is allowed.

If one dies of a disease a *resurrection* or similar spell restore them to their previous state of health.

TABLE 19.7: TERMINAL INFECTION

Roll	System Affected	Duration*	Effect**	DMG
1	Cardiac	6-10	-3 all physical, -2 intelligence	3-5/ Death
2	Circulatory	6-12	-2 all attributes	2-4/ Death
3	Dermatologic	4-12	-4 charisma	2-4
4	Endocrine	8-12	-3 all attributes	3-9/ Death
5	Gastro Intestinal	6-10	-3 strength, -2 dexterity, -2 constitution	2-4/ Death
6	Joint	4-12	-2 strength, -2 dexterity	2-4
7	Muscular	6-10	-2 dexterity & strength	3-5/ Death
8	Neurological, Sensory	8-12	-3 wisdom, -2 intelligence & charisma	2-4/ Death
9	Neurological, Cognitive	6-10	-3 mental	2-4/ Death
10	Neurological, Motor	8-12	-2 strength, -4 dexterity, -2 charisma	2-4/ Death
11	Respiratory	8-12	-3 strength & constitution, -2 intelligence	3-5/ Death
12	Urinary	6-10	-3 constitution	2-4/ Death

* Duration is in weeks.

** This represents a modifier to the dice roll, not the attribute itself.

*** This victim afflicted with this condition must make a weekly insanity to roll. See Insanity below.

INSANITY

When a character suffers from certain disease it can impact their sanity. Each week they suffer the physical ailment they must make a constitution save. The CL is equal to the number of weeks they have had the disease. If successful nothing happens. If they fail, roll a d4 for the results.

TYPES OF INSANITY

1: **Dementia Praecox.** When the condition manifests itself (once a day), the afflicted becomes uninterested in anything going on around him. This could be something as dramatic as combat or something as commonplace as buying a shirt. When the character is struck, there is a chance of a severe reaction; if they fail a wisdom check (CL 12) then they stop doing whatever they are doing, and wander off, sit or lay down.

2: **Hallucinatory Insanity.** This disease causes the afflicted to see or hear things that do not exist. The condition manifests about once every four days (becoming

progressively worse) or when the afflicted enters a stressful situation. In stressful situations, a constitution saving throw is required. If the saving throw fails, the character hallucinates enough to alter their reactions (for example, if the party is entering an unexplored dungeon, the stress triggers his insanity and he immediately sees a host of stirges attacking him and the party). The player should be made to believe that what he sees is real. The hallucinations affect the character's reactions in all situations. The hallucinations end in 2d6 turns.

3: **Hebephrenia.** The affliction causes the diseased to lapse into a dream world. They refuse to believe in the world around them and see things in a wholly different and inaccurate light. The disease is often characterized by wandering aimlessly about, muttering nonsense, shouting without reason, giggling and so on. The Castle Keeper should assume control of the character.

4: **Catatonia.** The afflicted lapses into a waking coma unable to take care of himself. Utterly distraught, the diseased sits or lies down in a catatonic state and does not react in any way to outside stimuli.

The diseased can be cured with one of the following spells: *cure disease*, *cure insanity*, *heal* or *wish*.

DIVINE INTERVENTION

Divine intervention is the play of the cosmos, when fate, fortune, heroism, luck, and deific will combine to give the character an extra boost when the chips are down. Divine intervention could be something as simple as a limited point system, like chips in poker that a character may expend to add to a positive event, or to mitigate a negative effect. Rules mechanics for luck, fate, and heroism come in many stripes and have a wide range of effect they may add to the game.

Although all such systems are similar, it is probably unwise at best to offer too many of them to the players as the power shift they give to the players could be highly unbalancing to standard game play. That said, in a fantasy role playing game that more closely resembles a super hero style game, Hero and Luck points offer an excellent opportunity to re-create over the top movie style action. A good rule of thumb when utilizing luck type systems is to keep them simple and limited to a small number of actions that allow players to positively affect their character's fate without detracting from great story telling.

When handling divine intervention it is always best to keep it behind the screens, allowing the need to drive the offerings of providence. However, some characters wish more control and CKs wish for less responsibility. In these cases, these optional rules might offer some guidance.

THE HAND OF DIVINE

Using deities or their avatars in games is a unique way to give characters an insight into the workings of the cosmos and the importance of their part in it. In some campaigns, the appearance of a deity or their avatar may take on a complete physical apparition where the deity or its agent gives specific commands to the characters that are expected to be followed on pain of death. In other instances, portends such as words on the wind, or a glowing cloud may be enough to communicate the wishes and deeds of a deity to the player characters.

Of Gods and Monsters offers a more in-depth look at the relationship between worshippers and their deities, and should be consulted for their use in game play.

FATE POINTS

Fate Points are a mechanic that provides characters with the means to affect game play in small, but significant ways. They represent the actions of cinematic heroes, who always seem to make those dramatic comebacks, have sudden flashes of insight just in time, or call upon inner reserves of strength to fell the villain just when things look grim.

Starting and Gaining Fate Points

Characters start with 3 fate points at first level. Thereafter they receive 1d4 additional fate points per level. They may save their fate points up, or use them all as the character sees fit, or as the need arises.

Using Fate Points

A character always has a limited amount of Fate Points, and while the character replenishes this supply with every new level he or she attains, the rate of attrition can far outstrip the rate of gain. As such, players must use them wisely. A character can spend Fate Points to do any of the following things, though are not limited to simply these uses if another valuable use arises that both the Castle Keeper and players can agree upon as valid and useful to their game.

Down But Not Out: When a character falls to at least -10 Hit Points or below, he is normally considered dead. Not so, if he has Fate Points to spend. Down but not out costs three fate points, and results in the character reduced to exactly -9 hit points, and stabilized. The character must have three fate points to spend in order to use this ability, and may only call upon it once per character level, and if he doesn't use it, it doesn't carry over. So a character who never has to use down but not out at second level doesn't have two uses of it waiting when he gets to third.

Fortune's Favor: When a character spends one fate point to improve a d20 roll, add 1d8 to the roll to help meet or exceed the target number. A character can declare the use of 1 fate point to alter a d20 roll after the roll is made-but only before the Castle Keeper reveals the result of that roll (whether the attack or check or saving throw succeeded or failed).

Fortune's Fool: Reroll a die. This roll may be to attempt a change in an attack roll against the player character, to re-attempt a saving throw, or to retry an attack roll that failed.

This fate point may be used at any time unlike fortune's favor that must be used before the Castle Keeper reveals their roll.

I Just Made It: By expending two fate points, a character automatically makes a saving throw. They must have the fate points to expend and declare they are expending the points prior to rolling any die.

Mighty Blow: When a character spends one fate point to make a single, earth-shattering attack, the attack is treated as though the player rolled a Natural 20 on his attack roll; it automatically hits the opponent. Also, the attack does double the maximum possible damage for the attack, or whichever critical hit system is preferred by the CK and his gaming group. The character then makes a second, unmodified d20 roll (unless the item is magical as noted below). A result of 1-5 on the d20 means that the weapon is destroyed as a result of the mighty blow (sword breaks, firearms are ruined from blowback, etc.). Magic weapons gain a bonus to this roll equal to +1 per point of the weapon's bonus (so a +3 sword gains a +3 to this roll), plus an additional +1 for each special ability the weapon possesses. This ability is useful only in melee combat and extra damage from special attacks such as sneak attack does not double. A fate point can be used to achieve this effect only once per game session.

Providence Smiles: By spending one or more fate points, a character can gain a small plot break that helps him in some minor way. He gains an important clue that he overlooked, just happens to be talking to the right person to get the information he needs, or has the cavalry come over the hill while he's in a hopeless situation. The player must describe exactly what the plot break is that his character gains, and the CK always has the right to overrule this use if he deems it improper, or if he has a good reason for the character to be in such a tight spot. If the plot break is overruled, the fate point is not spent. Characters can spend a point for providence smiles once per game session.

You Missed Me! You Missed Me!: By expending two fate points a character can avoid a single attack that would have otherwise struck the character. The character must have two fate points to expend in order to fully dodge the blow.

Sound the Charge: A character can spend a fate point to double their allotted movement for a single round. This includes the ability to move full movement and still attack. Unlike a normal charge maneuver, characters spending a fate point can move up to their full base movement and attack, but do not gain a bonus to damage or penalty to armor class. However, spending a fate point to sound the charge effectively doubles the distance a character can cover to take a charge maneuver in order to gain this bonus and suffer this penalty. In effect, this maneuver allows a character to move up to their full base movement and make a normal attack, or to double the distance up to which they may make a charge maneuver.

A character can only spend Fate Points once per round. If a character spends a point to strike a mighty blow, he or she can't spend another one in the same round to improve a die roll, and vice versa.

LUCK POINTS AND HERO POINTS

This system uses a combination of points similar to fate points, with luck points filling the niche of mundane bonuses to die rolls and hero points addressing truly heroic spectacles that characters often find themselves drawn into.

Characters are supposed to be heroes after all and thus should be able to do things an ordinary person would not. Some might call this luck, or the hand of fate. Heroes are routinely able to get out of situations others could not. They can also make leaps of logic outside the realm of normalcy, such as saving the girl at the last moment, disarming the bomb a millisecond before destruction and so on.

To simulate this character, have two types of extra points they can pull from, luck points and hero points. Each character starts with a 1d6+their highest attribute bonus in luck points, and 2 hero points.

Luck Points

These points can then be spent in different ways. Characters can spend luck points to influence a die roll up or down by 1 per point spent to a maximum of 6 per roll.

Example: Johann the Ranger wants to hit an armored troll that is terrorizing his allies. He spends 3 Luck Points to add +3 to his attack roll. His player declares his intent to spend the luck points BEFORE the attack roll is made. The points are expended whether they were needed to make a successful attack or not.

Luck points may be added to an attribute check, or a saving throw in order to give the character a better chance at success. The character may expend as many luck points as they have available in order to influence their die rolls. Luck Points may also be used to grant bad luck to a foe.

Example: Ard the wizard wishes that Callyandel the Elf fail his saving throw vs. Ard's *finger of death* spell and thus uses 4 luck points to penalize Callyandel's charisma save. This seems a great amount of luck to expend, but Ard really truly despises that elf and would love nothing more than to dance upon his grave.

Luck points regenerate at the end of a session, when, while assigning loot and experience, the characters erase their old luck points, roll 1d6+ attribute modifier and are ready to go again at the beginning of the next gaming session.

Hero Points

Hero points are synonymous with fate points and work in much the same way. When a character decides to use a hero point, he can do things far beyond the means of mere mortals. He can use a hero point to guarantee a hit against an impossible to hit enemy or to guarantee maximum damage. A character can use them to gain a broader critical hit range against an opponent (critical on a 19-20 instead of just 20). Or a character can expend them to garner a crucial piece of information, or in

a manner similar to the ones described under the fate points heading.

Expending and Earning Hero Points

Characters should always spend hero points in a manner appropriate to moving the story forward. In other words, they spend them in a heroic manner and not simply for selfish reasons. Hero points only recharge when the Castle Keeper deems they do. In other words, the CK may award extra hero points for completing a specific plot point or solving a difficult problem. Hero points may be given out as rewards in the same manner that bonus experience points or treasure are meted out to the players. Remember, that although a character begins their career with only two hero points, this is not the limit of how many they may ultimately earn or use. As a rule of thumb the character should receive a minimum of one hero point when they achieve a new experience level.

Ultimately, if the acts the player characters undertake are truly heroic they may find their hero points returned at the end of a campaign or when a character levels up. If the act is very heroic, the Castle Keeper may return the point or points immediately. On the other hand if the Castle Keeper determines the act was not very heroic the point may be lost forever.

Not so Divine Intervention: The Dice

As anyone who is a fan of the role playing hobby knows, sometimes dice can be a cruel mistress. There are certain dice that for whatever reason will not roll right. Indeed there are streaks of bad luck with the dice that fall into the category of legend. The why of these dice related funks are unknown, but it is known that the dice can indeed be punished for their infractions, or steps may be made to overcome a long funk with the dice.

Threats: The dice may be threatened for their bad behavior. Various die tortures to threaten may include dunking the offending die in scalding water, or threatening to place the die in the microwave oven for a few seconds to re-align its molecules. Following through with the threats has been known to correct a die's bad behavior and bring it back to the game table, humbled, and prepared to make heroic rolls on the player character's behalf.

The Lefty Flip: In some instances a character gets into such a funk that all they seem to roll on the D20 is a natural 1. In this case it is suggested that the lefty flip may be implemented whereby all 1's are read as 20's and all 20's are read as ones. In the ultimate of extreme situations it has been heard of where a player, whose only crime is bad die rolls, is granted a special pardon at the game table where not only are 20's a 20, but a 1 is read as a "20" as well.

Deeds: Occasionally minor explosives, drills, or other power tools may be called into action against a die that is truly cursed (possibly by a Gregdorf. See below). A die that simply will not roll correctly may need to be destroyed. The destruction of the offending die may act as a form of exorcism or catharsis for the player whereby removing the distractions caused by the offending die and allowing them to return to normal role play. Sometimes a sick die must be culled from the herd so that its illness doesn't go on to affect the well behaved dice in the player's stockpile. A five-pound hammer pretty much guarantees a die will never roll a bad roll again.

Time Out: Dice are meant to be played with. What better punishment is there than to set them in a bowl, out of play so that they can watch other dice behaving properly?

Hex Actions: Like scalding and microwaving, there are times when an opposing player or CK has entirely too much luck against you and it is time to put the mojo on another player's dice. Most commonly one crosses their eyes and waggles their fingers menacingly at another player's die. Another devious trick is to roll another player's hot die when they get up to go to the bathroom, or let it mix in with some unlucky dice of your own that have been placed in time out. Most heinous of these Hex actions is the Gregdorf, whereby a player surreptitiously stuffs an opponents dice down their pants then replaces them without the other player's knowledge. Use of hex actions against other players is generally considered dirty pool and should be shunned if your gaming group is to survive, but may be totally acceptable in a convention style setting.

DEATH & DYING

In World War I, some group of goodness knows who decided that when you personally shot down five armed aircraft you were given the title of Ace. This title stuck and became a target for any airman to hit. The same principle does not apply to **Castle & Crusades**. There are no Castle Keeper Aces, no matter how many characters the CK might kill. In fact, the point of the game is not to kill characters but rather the opposite. The goal is to create well balanced adventures and scenarios that are challenging, dangerous and fun. Many characters have fallen in many games over the years, some have been killed through doing crazy game stuff, some ridiculously, some heroically and some less than heroically and still others through no fault but for a host of bad rolls and poor luck. These deaths run the gamut from funny events that stunned everyone to frustrating failures that ruined whole games. Before a character gets killed, the CK and Player have to remember that there is more at stake than just a few random dice roles, as such a death may wreck the whole game, or worse the campaign.

Example: Only two players show up for the evening's game, the other four could not make it. This is not such a bad thing, occasionally its nice to have a low impact evening of *C&C*; the campaign has been going on for well over a year and many have leveled up multiple times, there are complicated plot points, interwoven story lines, NPCs, monsters with names and so forth. The CK decided to keep playing the same campaign and place the two characters, Karagi and Stark on a quick solo adventure. Both had made several levels, Stark 5th and Karagi 4th.

PART 3: THE SIEGE ENGINE

The adventure begins with a simple bandit chase. The previous game had a raiding party strike the group's camp and kill a low level NPC. Stark, a ranger, could easily track them. So leaving the party behind, the two of them set off into the wilderness that is the Darkenfold after the raiders. The evening's play goes quite well. The tracking takes up awhile, followed by a quick swift bandit battle followed by a random encounter that led the two characters off the main track and onto a small ridge. Here is the evenings adventure, quickly contrived by the CK for beneath the ridge lies the abandoned city of Baerentum, a long lost city in the Goose Neck, an unexplored section of the Southern Darkenfold. Intrigued by the ruins the characters look for a way down. It was open only on the southern end, thickly forested, and surrounded by cliffs roughly a hundred feet tall. Huge vines grow upon the cliff faces, hanging from the forest above. These vines are tangled, interwoven and hung all the way to the floor. They seem to afford an easy trip to the bottom.

After some discussion, Karagi convinced Stark to go down and they announced their intention to climb down the vines to the valley floor and explore the lost city. Without much thinking or consideration of the rules the CK replies, "Okay the trip down looks doable, but is going to take some effort. Just roll a d20, if you roll a 1 you fall." As soon as CK said it he knew it was a mistake. But there it was, he had said it. A game that had been going on for over a year, with good characters, lots of successful adventures and invested time, all hung on the balance of a dice. Karagi rolled and got in the high teens. Stark rolled and rolled a 1. The player's explosion of anger resonated around the house and we resigned ourselves to the inevitable. The CK quickly has him make a dexterity check to catch himself, he fails that at which point Karagi's player mentioned that he didn't think rangers could actually fall if they had something to climb on.

Everyone looks up and sure enough, the ranger can't fall in such circumstances because his wilderness skills have made him capable of climbing up and down climbable surfaces, and the vines were such a climbable surface: "When climbing typical natural slopes and inclines, such as steep but rocky hillsides, a ranger need not make an attribute check to scale the surface" **(Players Handbook, Scale)**. Though this was not really an attribute check but a fumble check, the CK rules that the surface was definitely climbable and covered by the ruling, so he technically could not fall. So the CK had him fall a few dozen feet, catch himself, wrench his arm out of socket and take some damage. The player was very unsatisfied with the ruling, even though it saved his character's life, because it seemed to somehow cheat the dice, which seemingly overrules all rules. He had rolled a 1 and the CK had ruled against it.

Looking analytically at this event there were only two possible outcomes. In the first, Stark falls to his death. In the second, Stark lives. But it's never that simple.

Looking at the first outcome, had the ruling gone otherwise and Stark plummeted through the vines, unable to slow his fall, he would have stuck the ground with extreme force. The cumulative damage is massive for a hundred foot fall and Stark, at 5th level, with no particular magical protection against falling would have perished. From a meta-game stand point, stepping far, far back and looking at the death, this is kind of cool. Adventurers take extreme risks all the time, climbing walls, leaping chasms, riding beasts not meant to be ridden, and so forth. There is a certain amount of realism that comes with such a fall.

"What happened to Stark," Ki asks when Karagi returns to the camp alone.

"He fell from a cliff and died," comes the answer.

There is a finality to this, a senselessness to the death that in role playing context makes the game more fascinating because even the mundane is deadly. It also adds a whole level of play to the game because there was no heroic fall for this titanic ranger who has fought countless battles and won. The realism resonates with the players for a long time to come.

Of course, that in and of itself is the problem with such a death. It was so out of character, out of game context that it leaves nothing but a residual feeling of 'crap, that sucks'. It makes players loath to risk their characters in these tasks, which in turn throw up innumerable obstacles to the Castle Keeper as the adventurers continually avoid things that might be risky for no gain. This can affect the game throughout. They don't go over the swinging rope bridge, but rather take the two extra days to go around the whole chasm. They don't try to swim the river, they look for a bridge. As realistic as these reactions would be, they are not heroic. Conan does not hesitate to leap up the cliff face. Tarzan swings from tree to tree, a hundred feet above the ground. John Carter leaps between the flying ships that are thousands of feet above the surface of Mars. In reality, these are risky events, but this is not a game of reality. It's a fantasy role playing game where people gather to unleash the hero in them, to conquer the unconquerable, to kill the un-killable monster and seize the day. Meshing too much realism with the game can derail a game as quickly as it can make it more interesting.

The greater problem with Stark's death comes in the whole game context. They were adventuring hundreds of miles from the nearest settlement. It might be realistic to allow the character to die from a fall, but now the Castle Keeper has to realistically replace the character with a character the player wants to play. Try having a wandering dwarf fighter in the middle of the darkest, dankest forest in the world and keep that mystique of realism about the game. Not to mention the annoyance that the player goes through after losing a character and the whole new process of bringing them into the game, fitting in with the present campaign arc, levels, abilities, and so forth.

Allowing the character to die, even though the dice called for it, may turn out to be far more detrimental to the game than the Castle Keeper at first thought. It really isn't that fun.

The opposite approach of having Stark live has far fewer pitfalls to it, if any. Though the realistic factor of death by mishap is removed from the game, which does impact the game, the overall game is not interrupted. The adventure continues,

the players continue with what they are doing and there is no massive disruption. The fun is not suddenly removed from the game by one bad roll which everyone suffers from at some point or the other (everyday life is filled with enough pitfalls and bad rolls to not make those in the game so catastrophic).

Of course there is another side to this coin, one from the player's point of view. In facing the cliff with the vines, both players could have taken extra precautions to make certain that they didn't fall. Often players abuse the situations they are put into in order to get through them as quickly as possible, this is often done in an insanely unrealistic manner. Facing a hundred foot cliff, with or without vines, and even the most experienced mountain climber would take some precautions such as studying the best way down, chalking fingers, tying guide ropes, etc. To come to a cliff and assume that because you are there you can climb down it, or to listen to that subtle CK speak which indicates you are supposed to climb down it, does not necessarily mean you have to charge into it without thought or planning.

The attitude that "we have to go this way because the adventure calls for it" can be as damaging to a game as the random senseless death of a beloved character. Players send their characters into countless situations where they just shouldn't be and any amount of reflection would reveal that.

Though it may seem like a good idea to do the crazy heroic deed and get yourself killed, it actually makes it more difficult. It's less fun for the CK because they are the ones who have to pick it all up and figure out how to restart the player. Though it may seem on the joking surface that Castle Keepers love to kill characters, especially stupid characters that do insane things, its really not all that fun. The CK knows that as soon as that final rule has passed and the character is dead that the evening's fun was just halved and the evenings reworking just doubled.

THAT WAS A GOOD CHARACTER TOO!

So what to do? When should the CK kill a character and when should a player risk a character. In the case of Stark, it would have been far better for the CK to simply say the following "Roll a d20, a roll of 1 means you have some difficulty." This simple sentence preserves the right to allow him to fall but to control the fall. This is what the good Castle Keeper does. Realism is preserved and danger remains but the CK has not lost control of the situation. If Todd says something like "Stark puts his double handed axe in his teeth, grabs a vine, cuts the end and swings to the bottom" the CK can quickly kill him. If on the other hand Todd says: "I go ahead and climb down," its easy enough to have him fall, catch himself and pull his arm out of his socket. He's been damaged because he didn't take precautions, for example, losing use of his second hand and being unable to use the aforementioned battle axe.

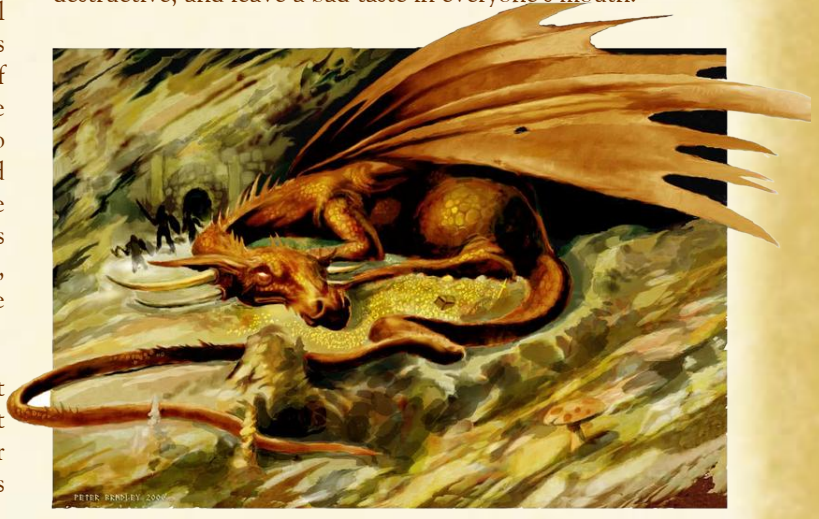
Two of the most important things to remember for all those at the table are how to make things challenging and how to not challenge everything. Challenging does not mean succeed or instant death. Challenging means it's something that challenges the imaginative role play of the players and the abilities of the characters. It doesn't mean that it is something that has to be overcome. Just because an obstacle is put in front of you don't mean you instantly have to attack it or overcome it.

DANGEROUS DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN DEADLY

Does this mean you should never kill a character? Of course not, the fear of death should be in the game, both as an arbiter of risk and as a reaction to crazy stunts. But the death of a character is far more than a notch on a gun or a flag on the side of your CK screens. The death of a character impacts the role playing game you are playing and before a CK needlessly kills a character or before a player needlessly kills himself, both should think about what is coming after the fall. Often the whole campaign and even the tone of the game have to be reset.

In James Goldman's play **The Lion in Winter**, where Henry II has his three sons Richard, Geoffrey and John imprisoned in the wine seller preparing them for execution, Eleanor brings them each a dagger. John and Geoffrey do not want to pick up the daggers, but Richard snatches his up in an instant, and immediately goes into a plan on how to slay Henry. When his brothers object that such an action serves no purpose Richard replies, "When the fall is all you have, the fall matters."

That's a great line and one that serves the role playing community well. If a character is to die, or does die, there should be some meaning to it. It should either serve the game you are playing or at least leave the player with a feeling of extreme sacrifice. It is the CK's job to make the job of adventuring as dangerous and life-threatening as possible, so that when the characters emerge from the adventure they are drained, exhausted, and exhilarated. It is the player's job to survive as best they can through whatever is thrown at them, to make the game challenging for the Castle Keeper by putting their scenarios to the ultimate test. If both sides pay heed to this then any game will have more meaning and a lot more fun. And the added benefit is that when a character enters that cold, cold ground, the death will be memorable and part of that fun, not destructive, and leave a bad taste in everyone's mouth.



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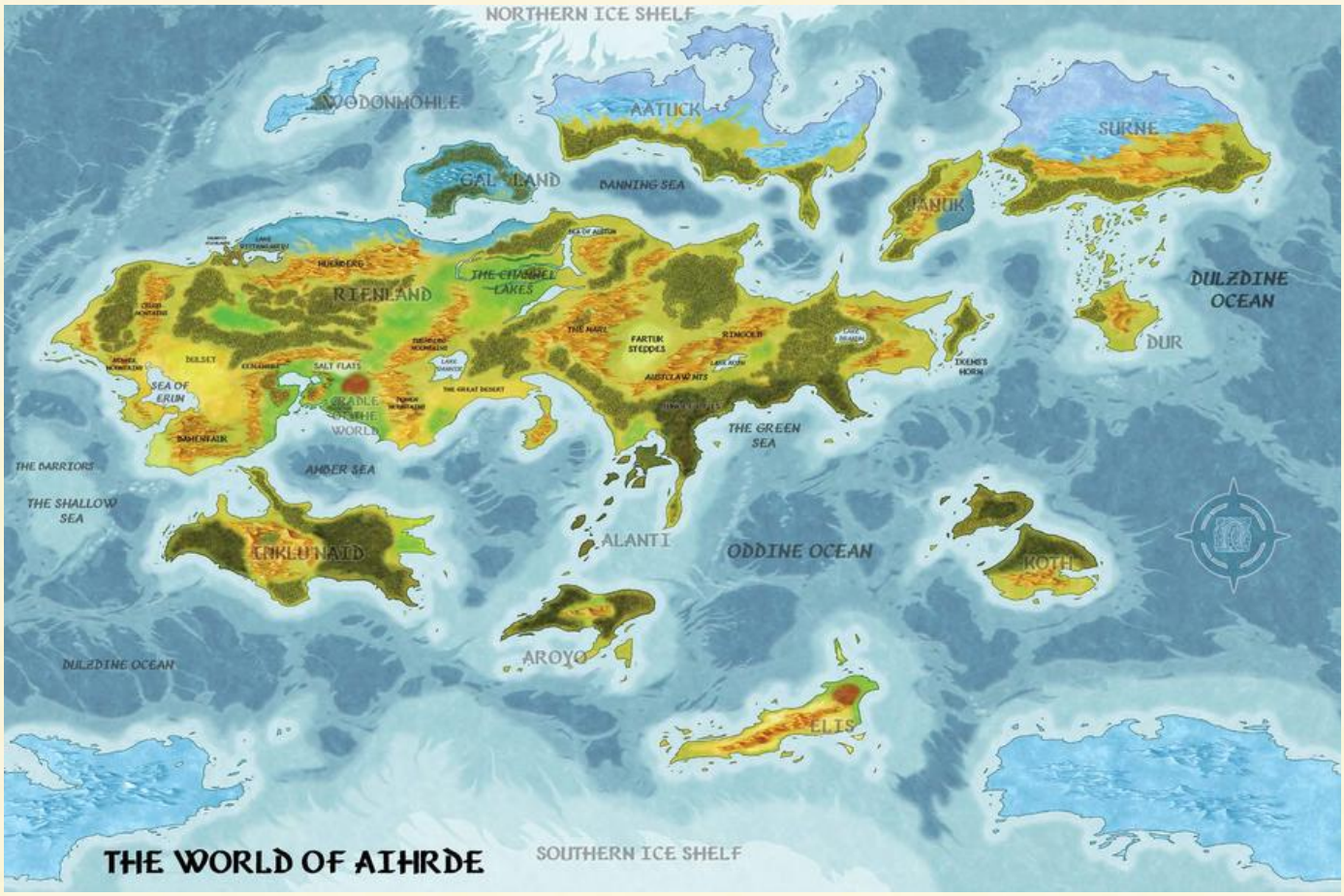

In the beginning was the Void and the Void stood empty of all form. With his first thought the All Father brought light to the Void and in this light he could see the empty space from its beginning to its end and he saw that the Void was both enduring and timeless.

The All Father saw the Void as a place unrelenting and he cast out upon it. A great wind rose about him and this was his second thought and he governed it, so that it stood like a vessel upon the Void, wide and open and from it all his thoughts flowed as a river into the Void. But the river of his mind was not wholly ordered and the thoughts flowed out from the beginning in many directions, in streams great and small. Some crossed over one the other, some gathered in deep pools, others wandered into the Void alone and without governance.

And he perceived that the streams of his mind would fray and split on their journey through the Void, some going wither they would. It was ever the All Father's desire to fashion his thoughts into form and to order them as he would for he knew that his thoughts would take on a life of their own, and cause mishap to his design. And in this he was prescient, as is known. So he took care and made of himself a Shadow to watch over the streams of his thought.

The Shadow of the All Father governed the streams and set them all on a course that bent in the same direction, for it was the Shadow's task to make certain that all the streams and rivers of his thought ended together in deep pools. In this we see the All Father's eternal strength; but it is also known that when the last of the rivers pool at the feet of the Shadow of the All Father, then the Shadow must consume time itself and thus bring the River of his Thought to completion. All know that those shall be the end of days, the Gonfod. Time and all things that are, or ever were, must end, and only the All Father knows what comes of the new beginning. But none know, save perhaps the All Father himself, when his creation will halt and the Gonfod come, or what might bring it.

Thus the Arc of Time, what the dwarves call, The River of Erde, came to be, from its beginning in the Vesk, the Vessel of the All Father's thought, where resided the Ea-Iul, the First Wind, which flowed through the Void to its close in the Endless Pools. And Toth, the Shadow, was the first of the great order of beings known as the Val-Eahrakun.

~ The Codex of Aihrde

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